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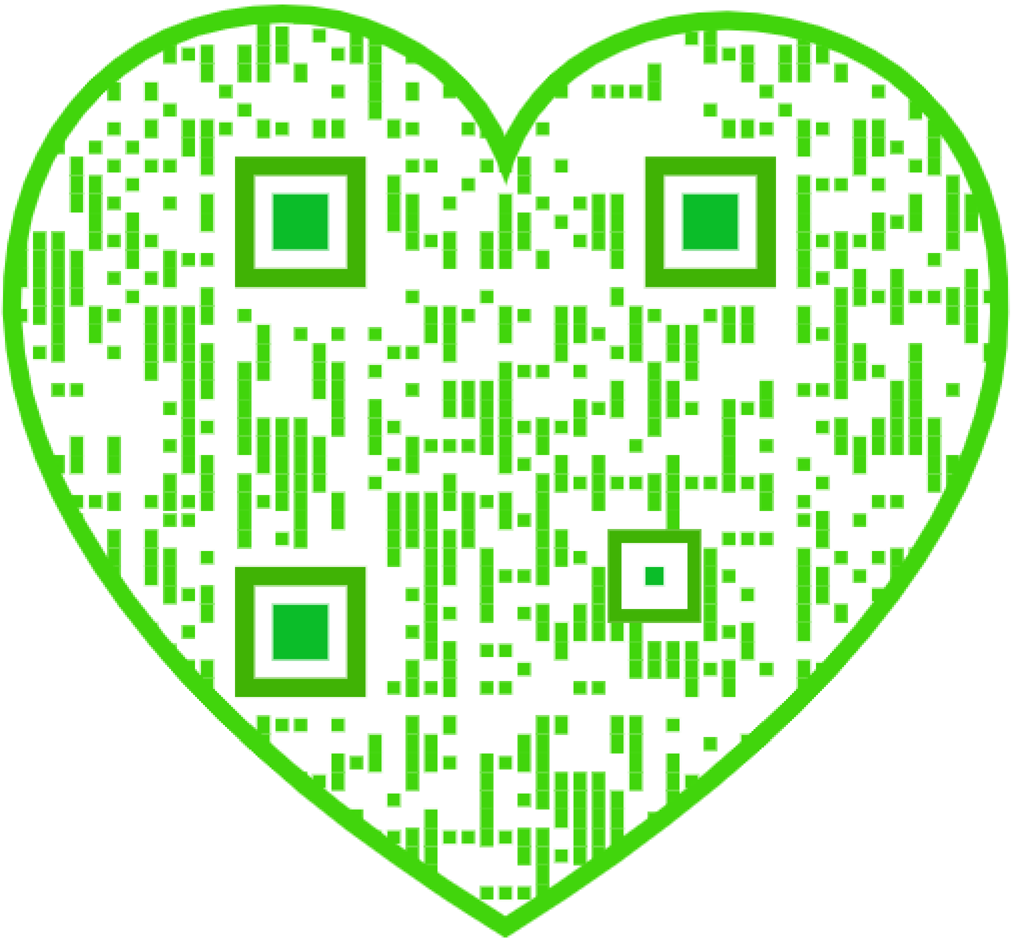

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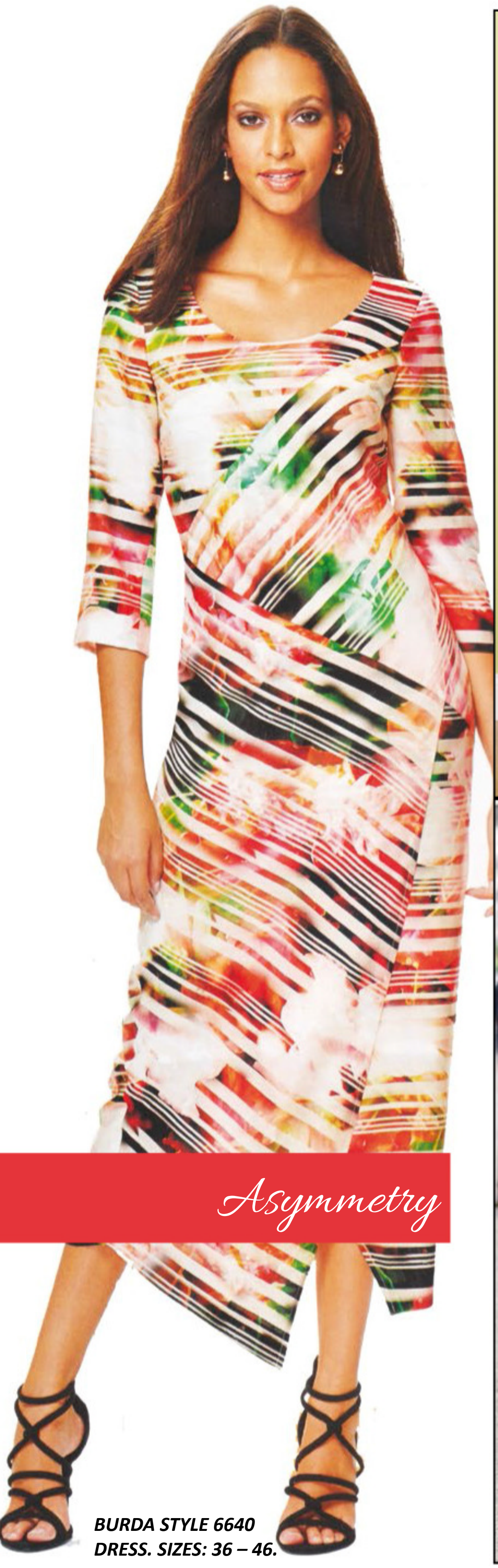
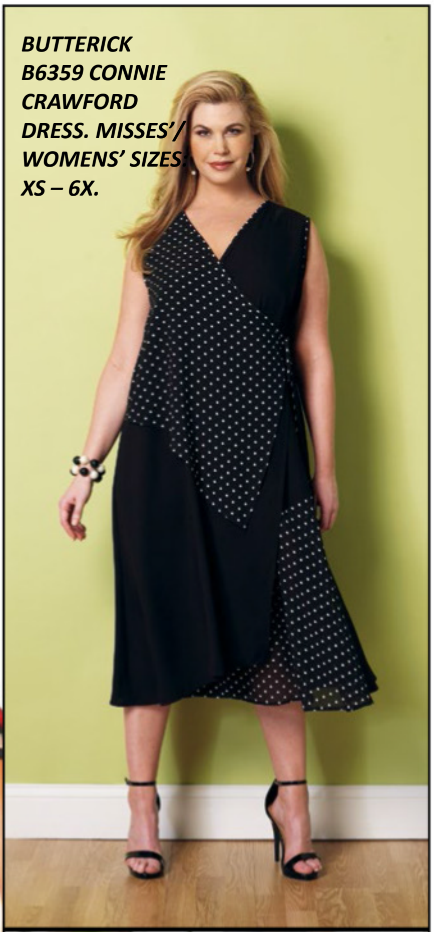
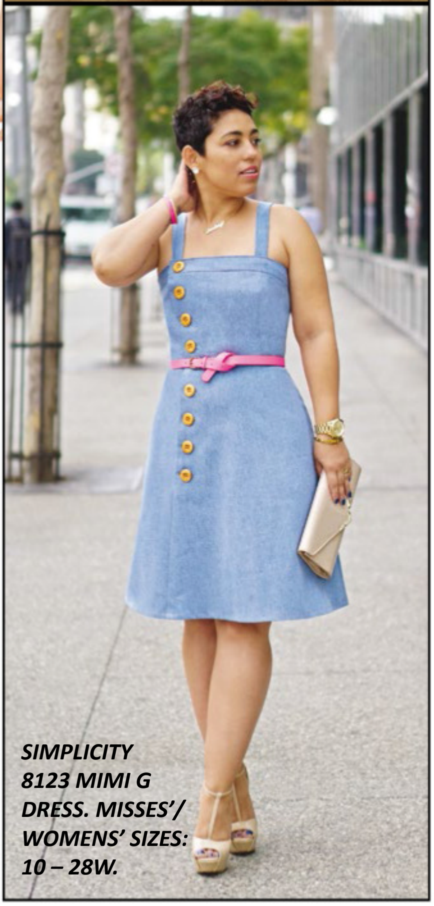
Asymmetry



BURDA STYLE 6640 DRESS. SIZES: 36 – 46.



BUTTERICK B6359 CONNIE CRAWFORD DRESS. MISSES'/ WOMENS' SIZES XS – 6X.



SIMPLICITY 8123 MIMI G DRESS. MISSES'/ WOMENS' SIZES: 10 – 28W.

Horizontal and vertical lines can be harsh on your figure, but those diagonal asymmetrical design lines always flatter … no matter what figure type you are!

- Not only can asymmetrical lines add interest to even the most basic dress, they are a boon to the fuller figure, especially when plains are spliced with pattern, as in the superb wrap dress by Connie Crawford for Butterick in the top inset. With black or any dark plain colour as the base, it could easily be your go-to dress for almost any occasion, not only this season, but all year round! Its figure slimming diagonal lines and subtle flare of the skirt are design details that always flatter … and are ones to watch out for in any dress you sew.
- Another great example of flattering asymmetry, Burda Style's look at left; especially great in any sort of striped pattern! The mock wrap skirt and diagonal bodice panels visually add subtle shape to an angular figure.
- Asymmetry doesn't just mean folds, wraps or layers … it can even be a simple detail, such as a row of buttons placed down one side of a dress, an effect that draws the eye up and down and therefore visually lengthens and slims any figure, as in Mimi G's faux wrap design for Simplicity in the bottom inset.

Ah, Hems!

Whether they're lightened up by splits, handkerchief points, asymmetry or other inventive ways to show a bit of leg, these aren't the same old droopy, drippy maxis!

- We all know that skirt length can visually make or break your body proportions, but when in doubt as to what length will suit, go diagonal. It works just as effectively as those asymmetrical design details shown on the facing page. Not only is an asymmetrical hem the fastest, no-fail route to adding visual height, it also updates any dress look in a flash (a wide 'V' surplice neckline beautifully balances that hem, as in the McCall's look at right).
- If maxi-dresses are a bit too 'maxi' for you, in that they visually weigh you down, lighten them up with a strategically placed split, as in the Simplicity style in the bottom inset. What better way to break up all that potentially figure enlarging fabric than with a flash of leg?
- Don't want to show so much leg? How about some more discreet side-slits on the irregular hem of a flattering flared dress that gracefully moves with you, such as Butterick's beauty (top inset)?
- Speaking of irregularity, remember hankie hems? They're back this season, but look fresher on more structured shapes and not-so-flimsy fabrics ... and they make quite a statement in stripes, as shown in the leg-lengthening Kwik•Sew stunner, middle inset.

Working with Knits

A sewer can never have enough information and even if you've been sewing for years, there is always something new to learn. Whether you are new to knit sewing or you familiarised yourself with knits a long time ago, this article is full of helpful tips and hints that should see you 'working with knits' for many years to come.

Butterick B6218

Knit Construction

Knit fabrics are made up of a series of interlocking loops that result in a flexible construction. All knits have a degree of stretch; the yarn and the knit structure used will significantly vary the amount and the direction of this stretch. There are two basic knit structures, warp and weft:

Warp knit fabric is constructed with many yarns forming loops at the same time in a lengthwise direction. Each yarn is controlled by its own needle, and interlocked with its neighbouring yarn in a zigzag fashion. This interlocking process produces fabrics that will usually not run and have restricted stretchability. See photo 1.

Weft knit fabric is constructed from looping a single yarn in a horizontal direction, and each succeeding line of the yarn being looped into the one before it. A knitting machine has a great number of hooked needles, which open and close automatically and hold each loop as the knitting is done. A broken loop in the knit will release others in a vertical row, causing a run. The machine stitches of a weft knit are exactly like those of hand knitting and the stretch is greater in width than in length. There are two types of weft knits – single and double. Single knits have a moderate to great amount of stretch. Double knits have body and stability similar to those of a woven fabric. See photos 2 and 3.

Selecting Knits and Patterns

Knit fabrics vary in stretchability. Just how much a knit stretches crosswise should be determined before you buy it as the total ease built into a pattern design is based on a specific amount of stretch. Choose a pattern according to the weight, texture, and stretch of the fabric. A soft, lightweight knit will suit a style with drapes or gathers. A bulky textured knit will be more suited to styles with few seams and details. You should not substitute a knit fabric when the pattern recommends a woven fabric. Some patterns are designed for both woven and knitted fabrics. These knit fabrics should be stable knits with very little stretch (double knit). If the pattern you have chosen is marked 'for knits only', it will probably supply a stretch gauge along the top of the pattern envelope or the instructions. This gauge helps you determine whether a particular knit will suit the pattern style.

Stretch Gauge

Make a fold approximately 10cm (4in) from the crosswise cut edge of the fabric. Mark off 10cm (4in) on this fold and place this marked part of fabric along the 10cm (4in) section of the gauge. Stretch the fabric gently to the right-hand side of the gauge. If the folded edge starts to curl, the fabric is stretched too much. If the fabric stretches comfortably to the designated point, or even slightly beyond it, the knit has enough stretch for the pattern.

Note: If you use a fabric that stretches more than recommended, the finished garment will have a looser fit. If the fabric stretches less, it will have a closer fit. If your pattern does not have a stretch gauge, measure off the same 10cm (4in) of fabric, as if using a stretch gauge, and stretch it out against a tape measure. If the fabric stretches to 12.75cm (5in), it has 25 per cent stretch; 15.25cm (6in), it has 50 per cent stretch; 17.75cm (7in) it has 75 per cent stretch. After stretching, notice whether the fabric returns to its original shape and dimension.

A knit that does not recover completely may sag or stretch out of shape during wear.

Preparation of your Fabric

For the best results, wash and dry your knit fabrics as you would the finished garment. (If uncertain about a particular knit, before purchasing, refer to the label on the roll for the manufacturer's recommended instructions.)

Pre-washing will help relax the

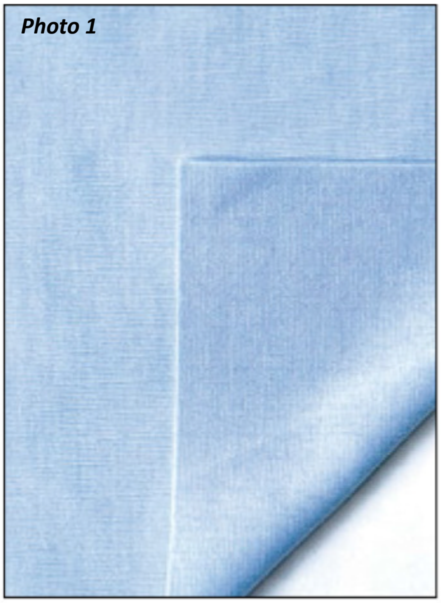
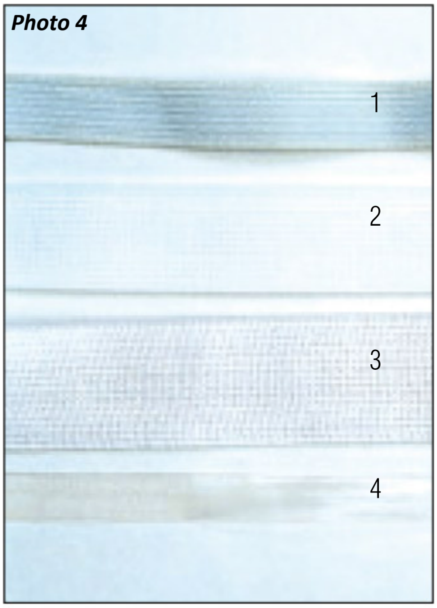
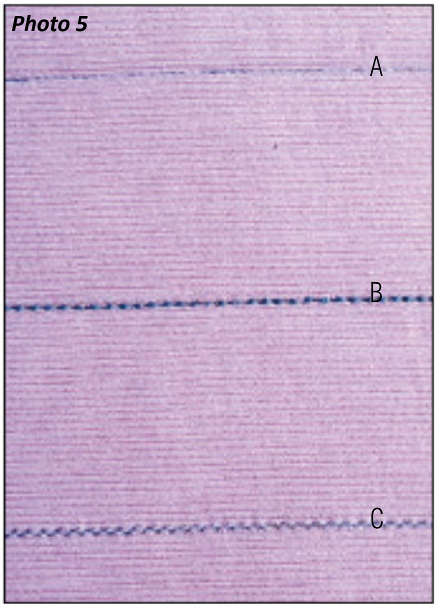


Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 2





fabric and remove any excess sizing that can cause skipped stitches. Do not pre-wash or shrink your ribbings as they tend to distort and the shrinkage occurs only in a lengthwise direction, making it narrower, not tighter.

Note: If after washing, the selvedge appears to be pulling the fabric inwards, cut it off. This will release the stress on the outer edges of the fabric.

Layout and Cutting

When you lay out and cut pattern pieces in knit fabrics, always use a 'with nap' pattern layout. This means you should have all your pattern pieces running in the one direction, ie the hemlines all pointing in the same direction. Knit fabrics have a directional quality that shows up in colour shading in the completed garment, if the 'with nap' has not been followed.

Do not allow the fabric to hang off the cutting surface, as the weight of the fabric can distort the portion on the work surface, pulling it off grain.

For efficient use of the fabric, two folds may allow you to place the front and back side-by-side. This means the two selvedges should be in the centre of the fabric, instead of both together along one edge.

Right and wrong side 'single' knits have fine, lengthwise ribs on the right side and crosswise loops on the wrong side. If you are not sure which is the right or wrong side, decide on one side as the right side and mark the wrong side of each garment piece with tailor's chalk or magic tape.

If the fabric edges roll, use spray starch on the curling edges and lay the fabric out with right sides together, placing the pattern pieces on the wrong side of the fabric.

A rotary cutter and mat will allow the cutting of knit fabrics without shifting or stretching.

Interfacings and Elastic

Interfacing

Knit fabrics do not usually require interfacing because their designs are less structured. For areas such as necklines, collars, cuffs, plackets, and buttonholes, that require support, select an interfacing according to the weight, stretch and the desired finish.

Fusible non-woven or knit interfacing should be slightly lighter in weight than the garment fabric due to the bonding process which causes the interfacing to become heavier in weight.

Elastic

There are various types of elastic, all with different stretch and recovery characteristics. See photo 4.

1. Braided elastic – will become narrower when stretched suitable for casing applications; good stretch and recovery.

2 and 3. Woven and knitted elastics – retain their original width when stretched; suitable for casing, stitched-on or top-stitched application.

4. Transparent elastic – stretches three to four times its length and has complete recovery; suits stitched-on or top-stitched applications; mostly used for swimwear and lingerie.

Seam stitches

Straight Stitch A

You can sew a knit garment using a 2mm stitch length and slightly stretching the fabric in the front and back of the presser foot as you sew. Do not pull or drag the fabric through as this can bend or break the needle. See photo 5.

Straight Stretch Stitch B

A typical straight stretch stitch is two stitches forward and one reverse, putting three stitches in one place. You do not need to stretch the fabric as you're sewing this stitch. See photo 5.

Zigzag Stitch C

A zigzag stitch has in-built stretch and is suitable for knits. The seams are sewn using a narrow, short zigzag stitch, then pressed open. See photo 5.

Overlock Stitch on the Sewing Machine

These stitches sew and neaten the edges in one step. It is not necessary to stretch the fabric whilst sewing as this is a strong elastic stitch. This type of stitch is recommended for seams of heavy stress areas and very stretchy fabrics. See photo 6.

Overlocking Stitches

The overlocker will sew, neaten the edges, and trim the excess seam allowance in one step.

- For maximum stretch, use a 3-thread overlock.
- For moderate stretch, use a 4-thread overlock.
- Use a stitch width (cutting width) of 3-4mm for all medium to heavyweight fabrics.
- Use a stitch width (cutting width) of 2-3mm for lightweight fabrics to prevent puckering. See photo 7.

Note: As all brands of machines have different settings, you should refer to your machine manual for the correct settings for the above stitches and cutting widths.

Hems

The three most common hems for knits garments are the catch stitched hem, the blind hem and the top-stitched hem.

Press any hem in place before stitching by lowering and lifting the iron from the fabric. Always let the fabric cool and dry before removing from the ironing surface, to avoid the fabric going out of shape.

Catch Stitch

Working from left to right, catch the fabric alternatively at the hem edge and the garments using a herringbone stitch. Space the stitches approximately 1cm (3/8in) apart. Stretch the fabric slightly before ending off the thread. See photo 7.

Blind Hem

Overlock the raw edges and press up the hem. With right sides facing, fold the hem allowance back and under, with the hem edge extending 1cm (3/8in) beyond the fold. Using the

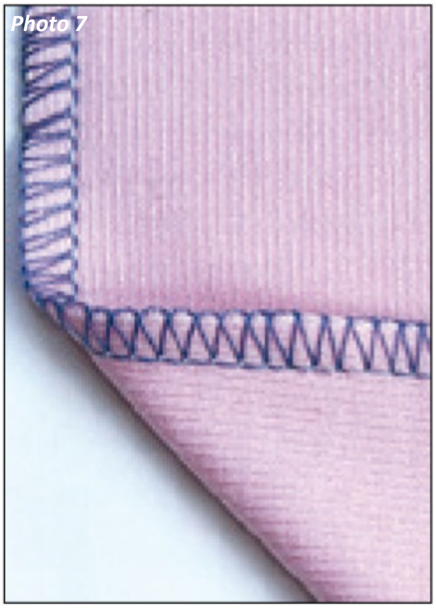


Photo 7

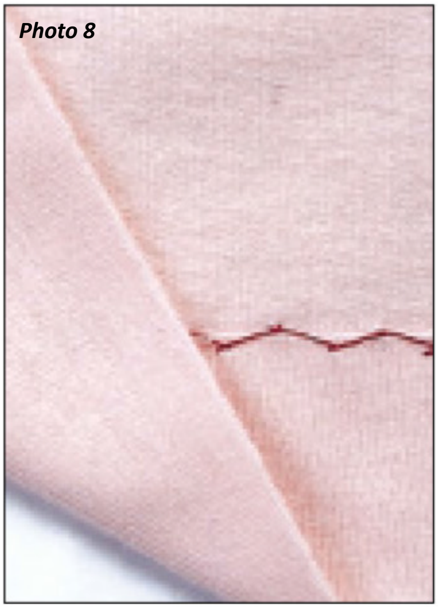


Photo 8

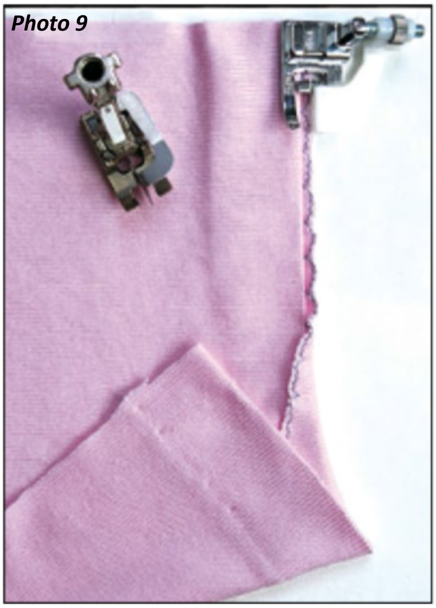
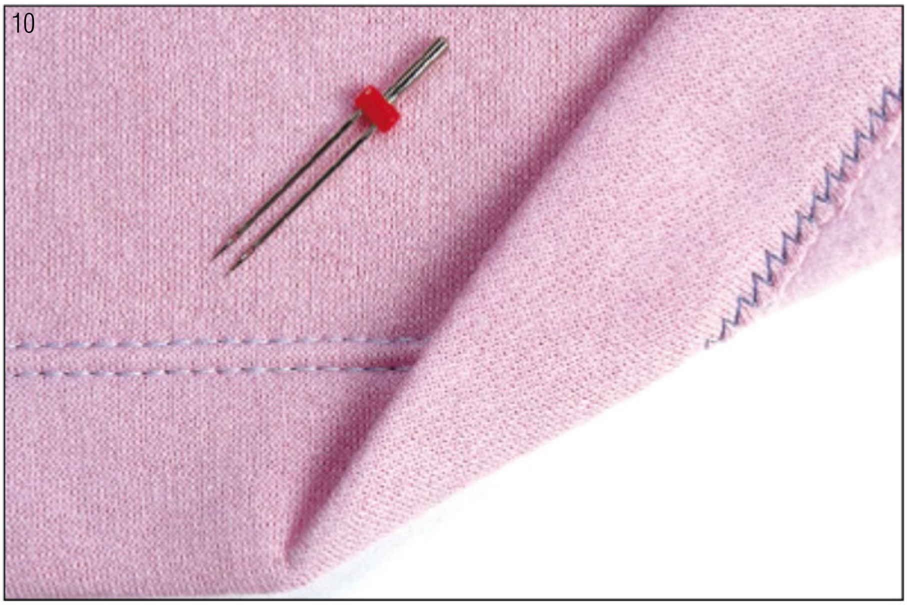


Photo 9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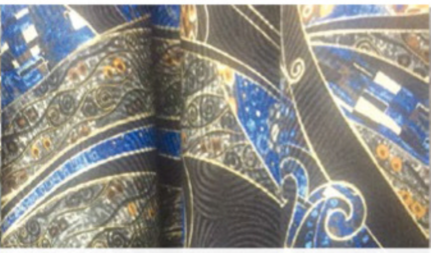
blind hemstitch on your sewing machine, stitch on the extended hem edge. Adjust the stitch width and stitch length so the stitch is only just catching the fold of the fabric. See photo 9.

Topstitched Hems

Overlock the raw edges if desired, and press the hem in place. Stitch through both layers, working from the right side using a single or double needle. See photo 10.

Hope this gets you sewing knits! There are so many pattern choices, for all seasons, and most garments can be constructed in very little time.



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Travel Wardrobe Analysis

By Lynn Cook

It has been fifteen months since Lynn retired from Australian Stitches magazine, and in that time she has travelled to Europe and the United States.

Now she is back on home soil, and as promised, she is happy to share with you her tips on travelling with a sensible mix and match wardrobe – especially down the Rhine and Danube rivers on a 'spaceship'. So, here goes, warts and all!

I'll give you my bad news first:

It doesn't matter how much you take, if you cannot carry or wheel the bag yourself, don't do it. You simply have to be in total control. It is dangerous to one's marriage; believe me and if you are not married, finding a helper is not easy as everyone else has his or her own bag to look after.

The next important thing is to make sure your bag has decent wheels that do work and don't rotate causing the bag to change direction, roll over or refuse to move (do not ask me how I found this out!)

Just because you might be lucky enough to have a butler on board and washing, ironing and dry cleaning services available you will always want to wear the very thing that has gone to the laundry. So work on the assumption that you have to do your own laundry and have all bases covered just in case.

Would I take the same types of clothes again? You be the judge:

This is the list of base garments for daywear I chose to take (Vol 23 No 2 – Part 1):

- 4x linen shirts in turquoise /aqua/ caramel/dark blue.

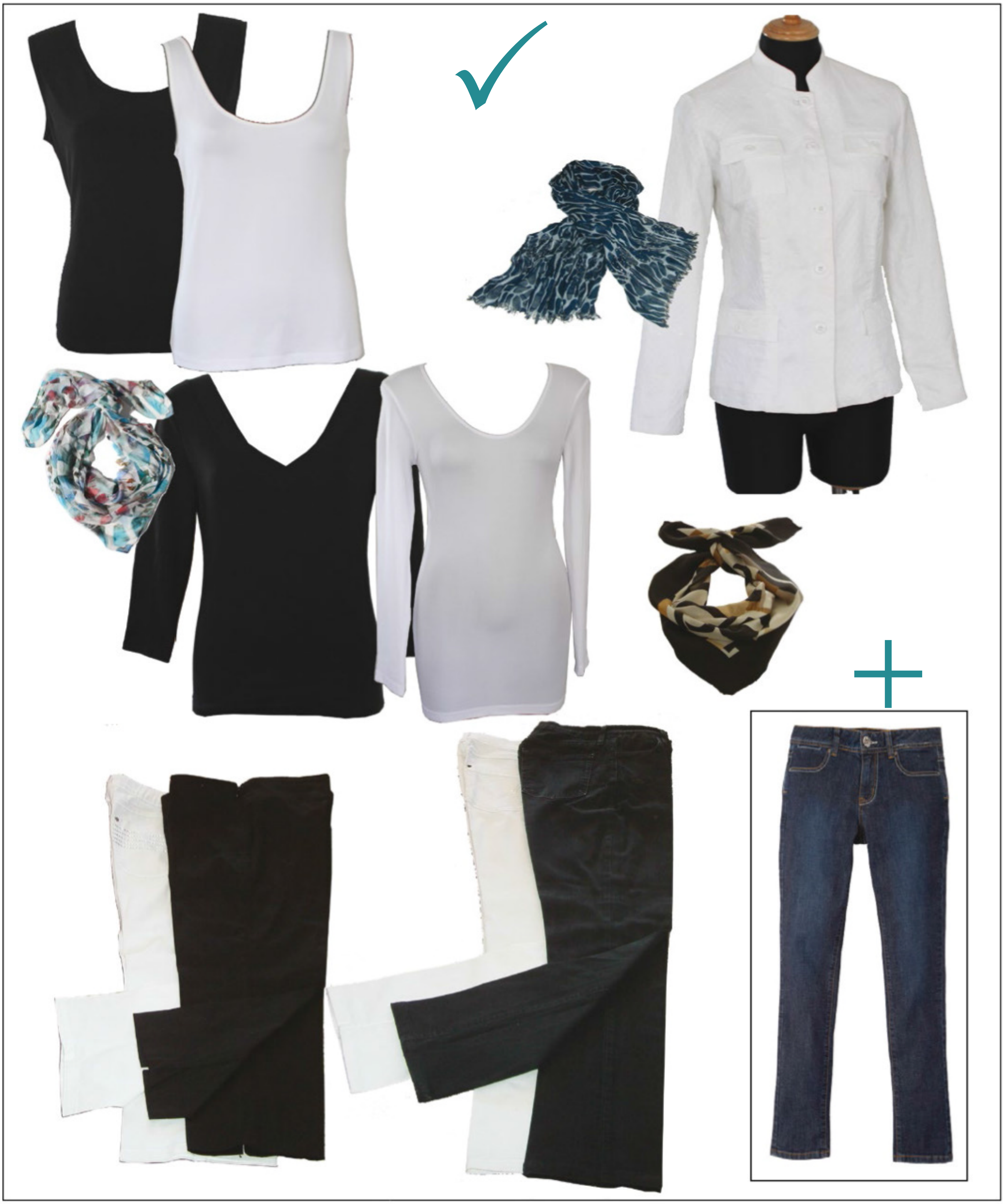
I would leave these at home. They were way too much trouble, even with someone to take care of them. By the end of the day I looked like an unmade bed.

- 1x black and white striped shirt to go with everything.

This is optional. I found it too dressy for daywear and I lived in cotton knit tops.

- 4x t-shirts. Two white and two black

I would take 3-4 of each instead. All with different necklines and sleeve lengths due to fluctuating weather



and wanting to have a change in style if not colour.

- 2 x camisoles in black and white

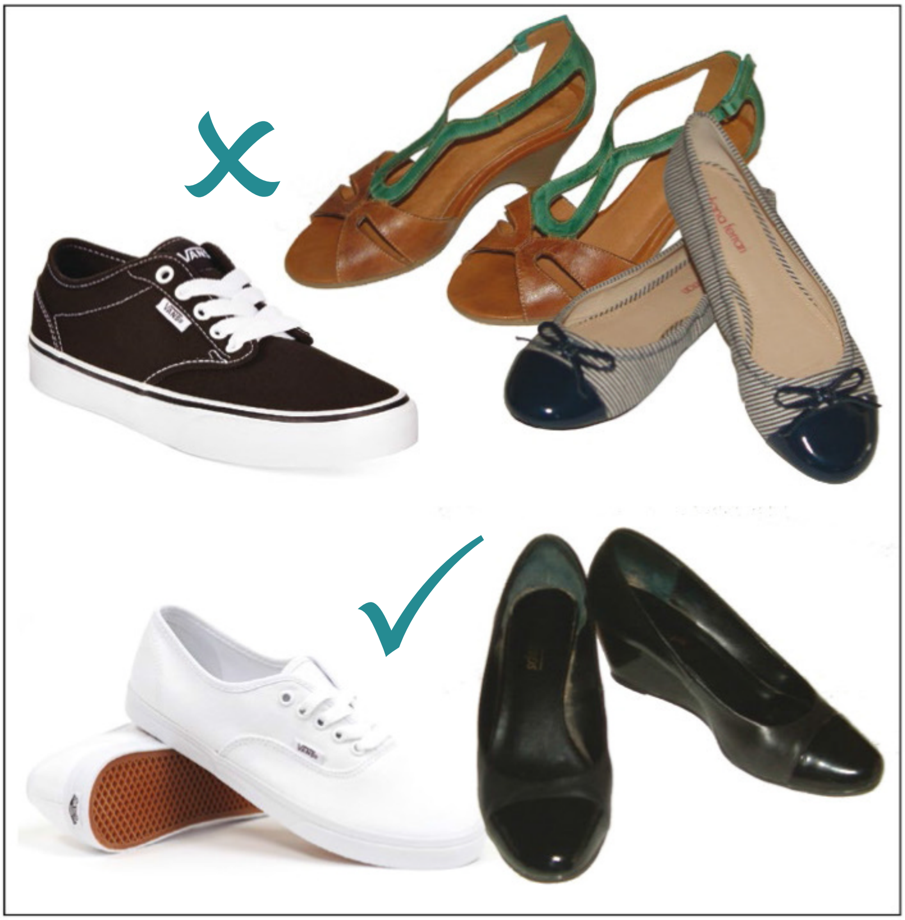
Make these drip dry, as they are easy to hand wash.

- 4 x pants: white capri, white jeans, black jeans, black straight leg in a stretch knit or microfibre.

I would also add in either light or dark blue jeans just for a change and they go perfectly with any colour and great for climbing or scrambling up rocks to ancient castles!

- 1 x white heavy stretch cotton jacket for layering.

I certainly would keep this in but the colour is your choice. As it doesn't



have to be white, and on reflection I might change to/or take an extra in either leather or denim.

- 4 x pair of shoes: black sneakers, black wedges, blue and white stripe flats, tan and aqua wedges.

I ditched the black sneakers for a white pair, kept the black wedges and also ditched the blue and white stripes and tan and aqua wedges – further on you will see why.

- Gold jewellery only and a few matching scarves as they take up little room.

Great choice for me as they worked perfectly. From now on I would rather make my colour work in scarves rather than more clothing, as they take up little space.

- Several belts to mix and match.

I found I didn't need the belts as all my tops were worn over my pants and not tucked in.

- 1 black handbag with numerous pockets.

This handbag proved to be the perfect choice for travel, so much so, that I don't want to wear it out with everyday wear so have put it away for my special trips.

What I did do right:

When I decided to embark on a wardrobe of black and white and adding just a few colours, it was a sensible thing to do. Especially taking multiples of the same thing, such as several black tops and white tops. I am forever grateful I did this as I always had one being cleaned and then a choice of others. It might be a bit boring for some but it worked for me and for the future I'd take more scarves in different colours, as they are lightweight and can tuck into small spaces, and change the look of the same outfit in so many ways. If necessary, I would add silver jewellery to the mix, as some colours in scarves require a different colour metal. And it only needs one or two pairs of silver earrings and a silver chain to ring the changes.

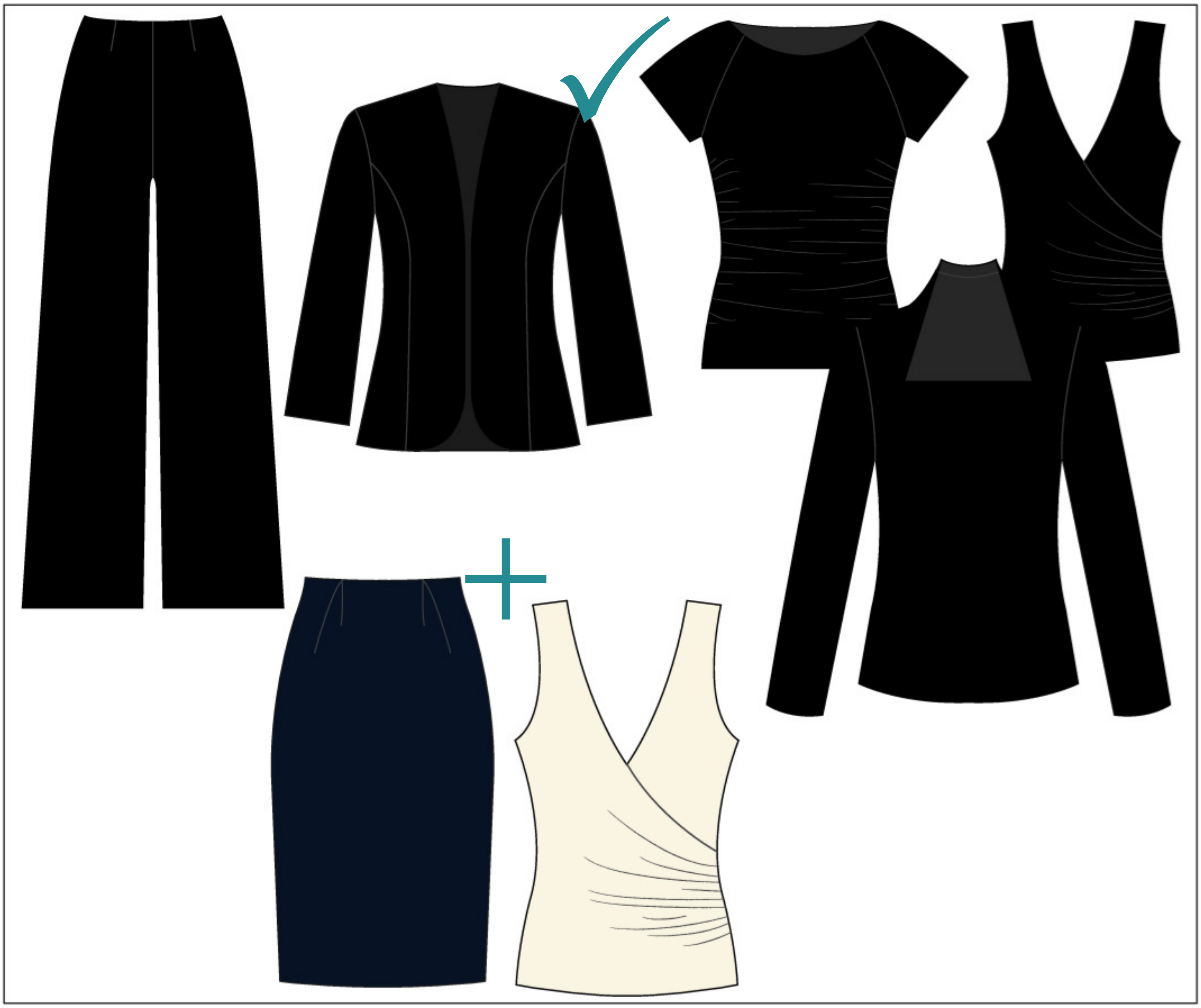
Great tip: Interchangeable jewellery! I purchased necklace, earrings and ring which came with interchangeable coloured stones. So you only need one ring, one set of earrings and one plain necklace, and then add the different colours to change the look. They attach like a press-stud.

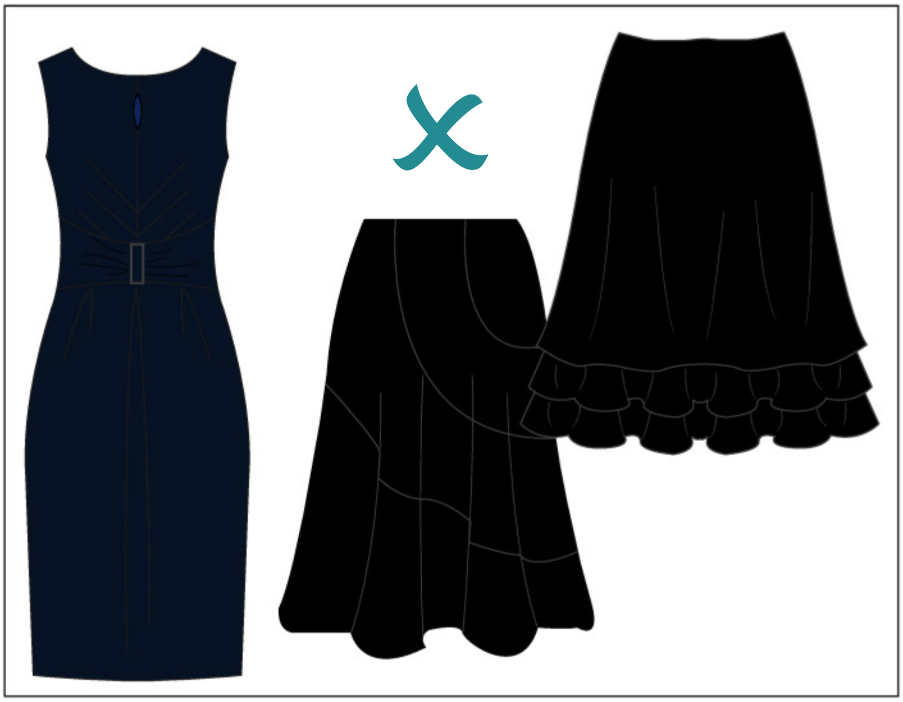
So that is it for my daywear.

Now, you may think I have added more garments than I have discarded and I have but what I have saved on is weight. I gained here by ditching shoes and four linen shirts which are a lot heavier than cotton knits and there is still the eveningwear and semi-evening wear to consider from Vol 23 No 3.

Evenings on the Ship
What would I do differently?

Of all the garments I took for evening on the boat, or going out to shows when in port, such as the opera and symphony orchestras (in castles or palaces no less!), I would take the wide-leg black pant, the soft black jacket, the three tops with different sleeve options. I would ditch the three drapey skirts and the dress, plus the cream top and choose instead a black pencil skirt in either long or knee length. This doubles as the dress by using the three options of tops. I think I





would also consider the sleeveless crossover top in another colour (personally I would make an off white satin one) to wear under the jacket just to break-up the black.

I have also noticed from Part 2 that I haven't mentioned a pair of evening shoes. This is a must whether you wear stilettos or flats, you do need an evening look. For me, I chose a court stiletto in black suede and patent leather, which also worked for daywear with any of the pants worn. But, for the places I was going it was not an option as everywhere in Europe I went there were cobblestones.

Summary

For those of you who are thinking of going on a river cruise I cannot recommend it highly enough. It was the most wonderful time with everything organized for us and totally safe. The staff where all English speaking, so professional, and a lot of fun. There are many different options and shipping companies offering fantastic deals. We chose Scenic as the price was fixed and food and beverages all included. No nasty surprises. I spent $200 extra because I had my hair cut and styled plus a massage after a day of climbing up rocks to a castle. For those who are less mobile there are still options for you to get there. Just the best way to travel on water – the rivers are teaming with life and the villages we visited from Amsterdam through Germany, Austria, and Hungary were so exciting and then there was Budapest! I never stopped loving it and had to be dragged off kicking and screaming. Needless to say that didn't work as I am back home planning another trip.

It just so happens we are going on another river cruise and I plan to do another wardrobe. I will be very conscious of weight this time round as we will be moving around a lot compared to being on a boat where we unpack once. It will throw up some challenges, but I will have fun planning it. Lynn

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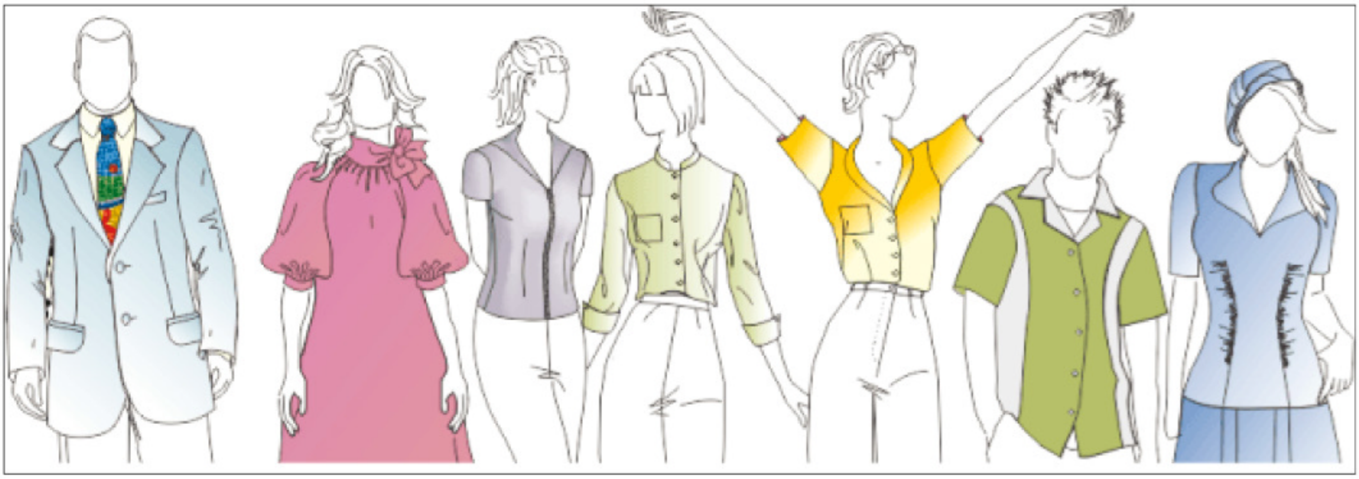
Anatomy of the Collar

By Lisa A. Christman, Ph.D.

Collars are both functional and decorative features sewn to the neckline of a garment. As decoration, the collar is often the focal point of the garment drawing the eye upward to frame the face.



As a functional feature, collars often provide warmth and protection from the elements. Both the neckline and outer edge of a collar contribute to its overall appearance. Collars can be wide or narrow, flat or rolled, cut-on or sewn-on. The outside edge of the collar can be straight, curved, scalloped, or pointed. This article describes the anatomy of the collar, terminology, and style options.

Collars typically consist of an upper collar, an under collar, and interfacing. They can be cut on the lengthwise, crosswise, or bias grainlines depending upon the desired effect and the type of fabric selected.

Collar Categories

Collars typically fall into five main categories:

Stand Collar: Collar that has no fall or roll. It stands straight up from the neck edge. An example is the mandarin.

Flat Collar: (Also called non-convertible) the neckline edge of the flat collar closely conforms to the neckline edge of the garment. When the garment is unbuttoned, the collar stays in place. The Peter Pan is an example of a flat collar.

Rolled Collar: Collar that has both a stand and fall integrated into the collar. The shape of the collar's neckline edge that attaches to the back neckline of the garment determines the amount of "roll" a collar will have. In general, the straighter the neckline edge of the collar, the greater the amount of roll at the back neck. Examples include the convertible or shirt collar.

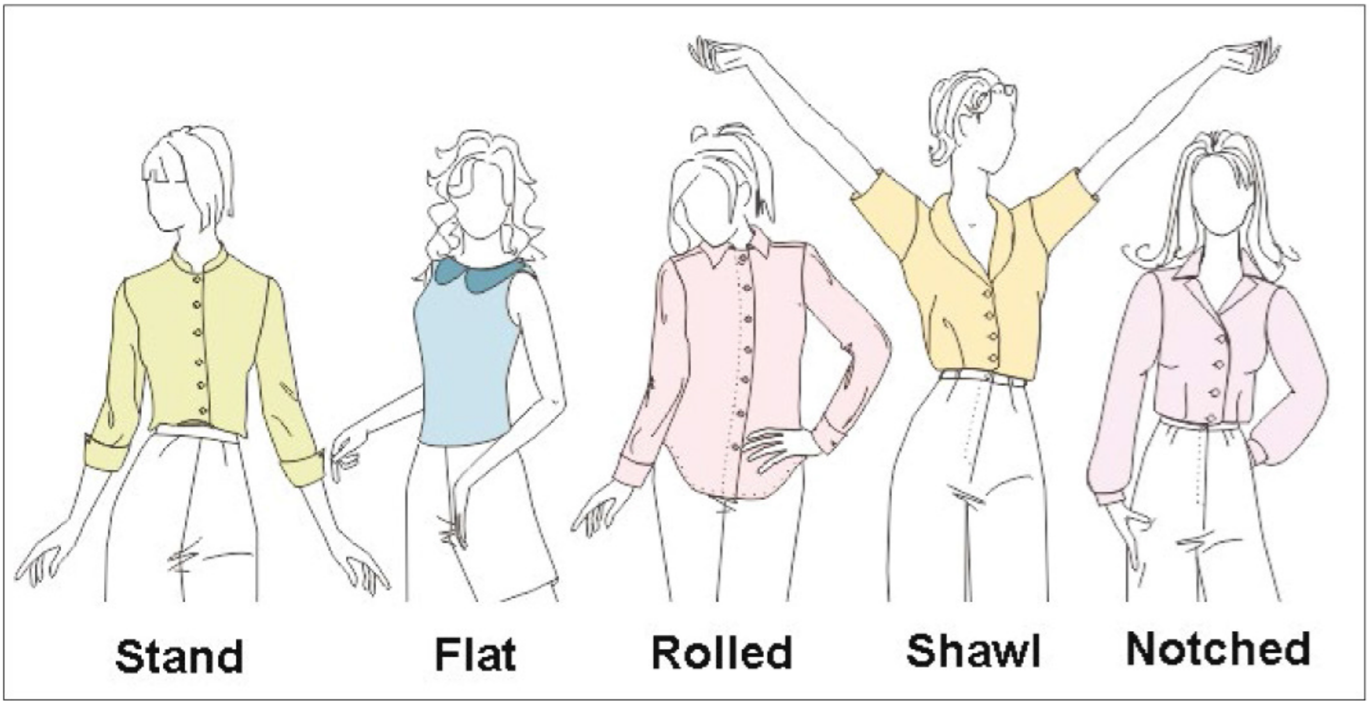
Shawl Collar: Collar that is 'cut on' or connected to the bodice.

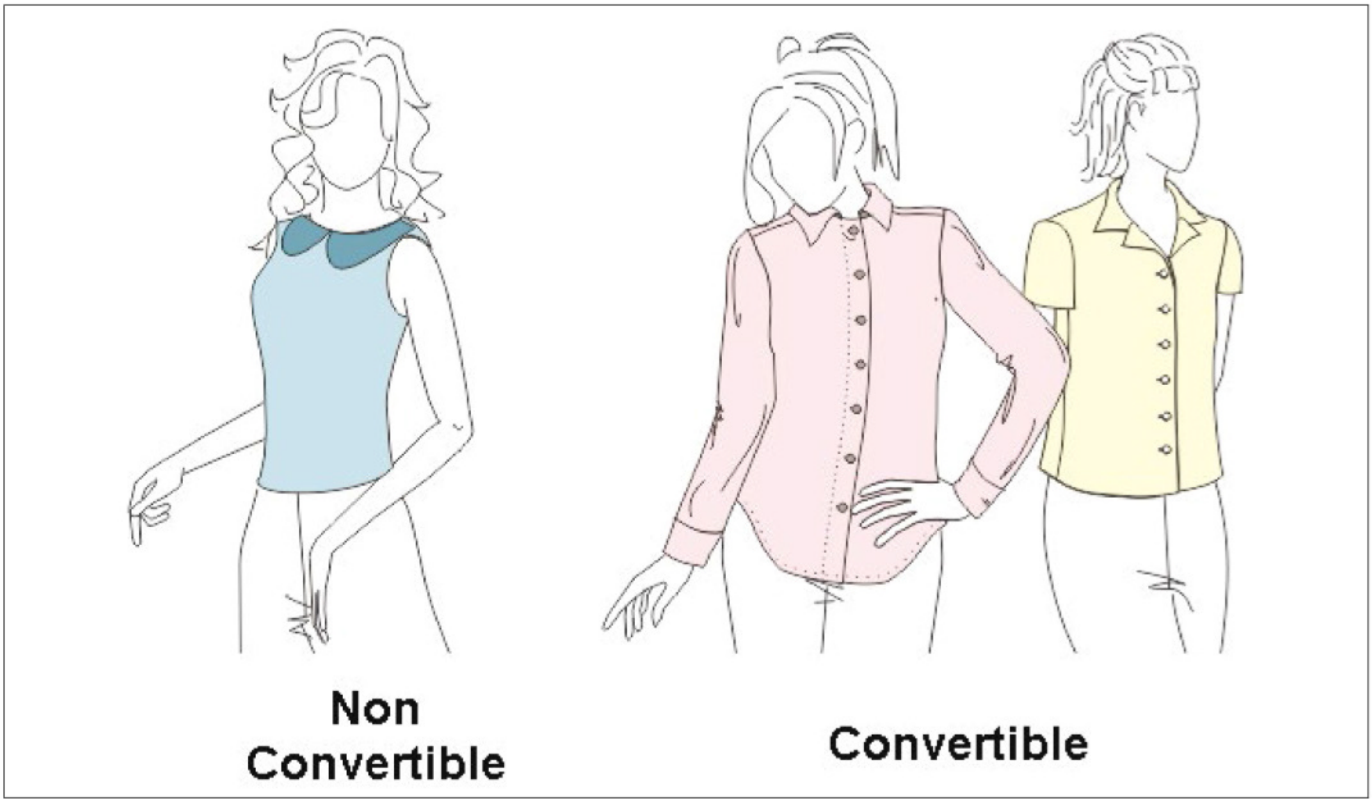
Notched Collar: Two-piece collar attached to a 'cut on' lapel.

Collar Classifications

For sewn-on collars, the neckline seam of the collar will have one of two basic shapes regardless of the shape or design of the collar style line.

Non-convertible Collar: Closely follows the actual shape of the



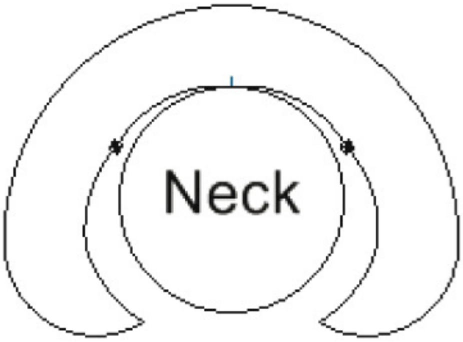


neckline. This type of collar will stay in place when the garment is not buttoned. The most common example of a non-convertible collar is the Peter Pan collar. The Peter Pan collar is drafted from the shape of the front and back neckline seams.

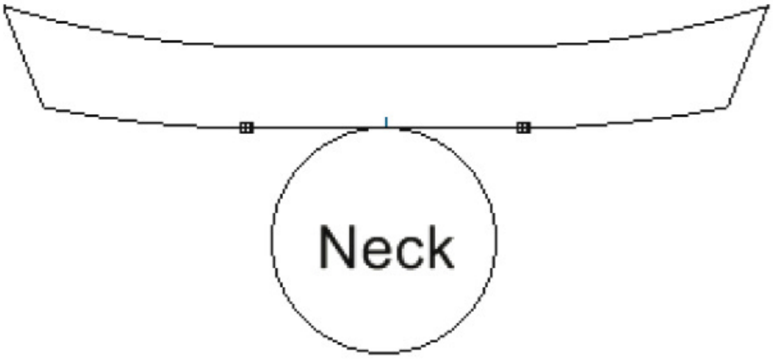
Convertible Collar: The neckline edge of the collar does not conform to the neckline edge of the garment. It is typically straight or convex. Convertible collars are designed to be worn with the garment open or closed. When in the closed position, the convertible collar appears similar to a half roll collar. When worn open, the front of the garment folds back to assume the appearance of revers and the collar has a notched design. Convertible collars are usually sewn with a facing attached to the bodice front so the garment will have a finished appearance either way it is worn or sewn to a separate stand.

Collar Terminology

Neckline Edge: The side of the



Non-Convertible



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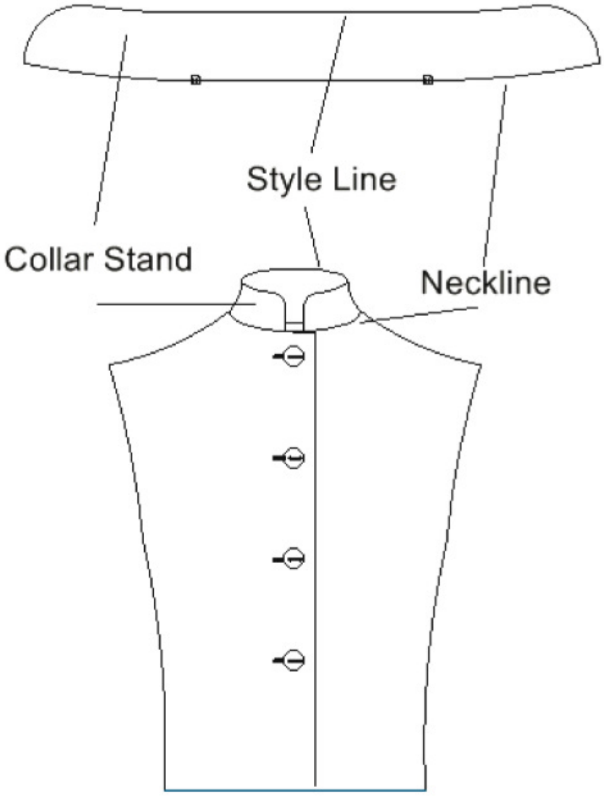
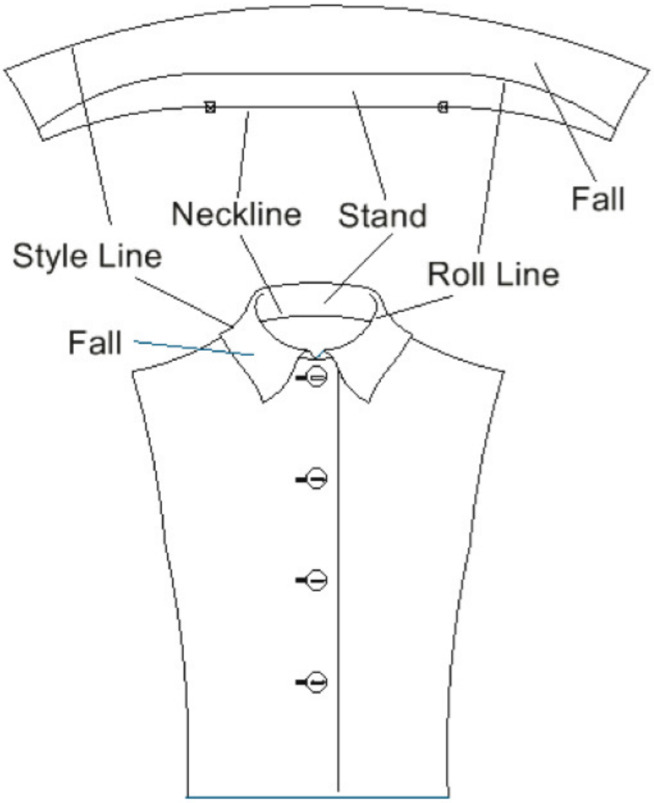
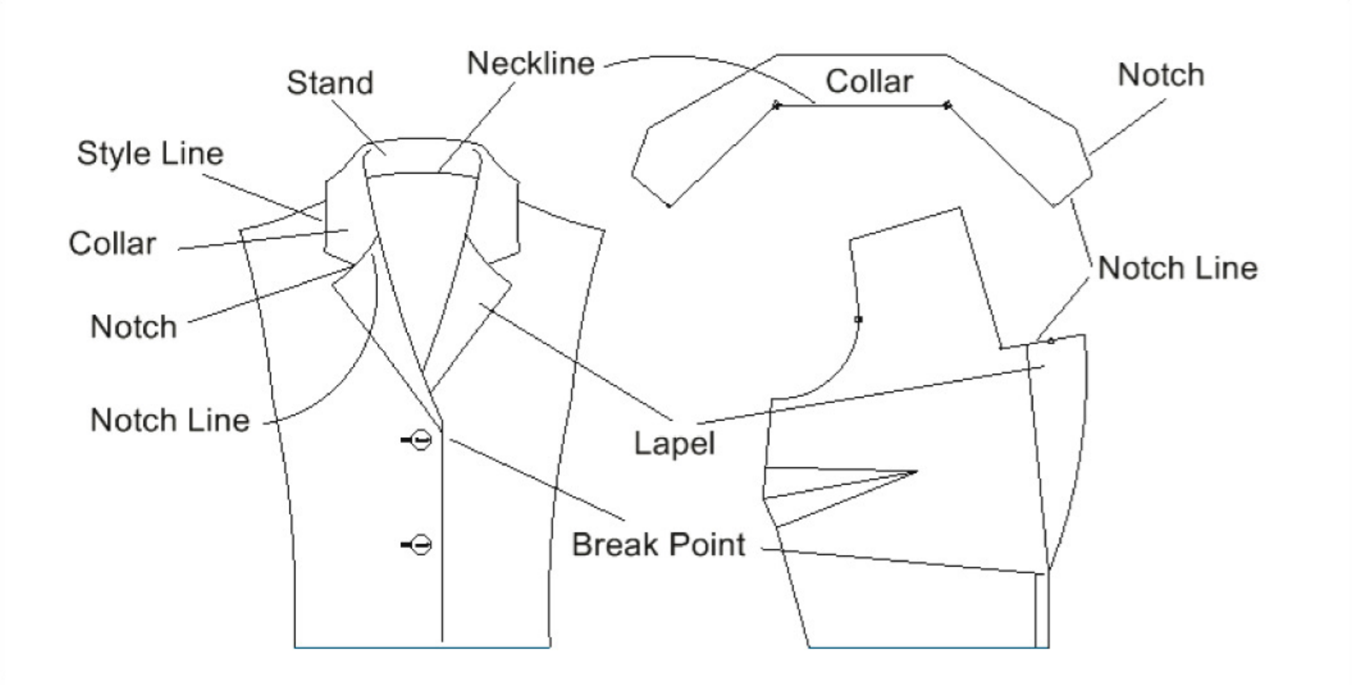

Style Line
Collar Stand
Neckline

Stand Collar


Neckline
Stand
Fall
Style Line
Roll Line
Fall

Rolled Collar


Stand
Neckline
Collar
Notch
Style Line
Collar
Notch
Notch Line
Notch Line
Lapel
Break Point

Notched Collar

collar that sews to the neckline of the garment.

Stand: The portion of the collar that rises up from the neckline edge.

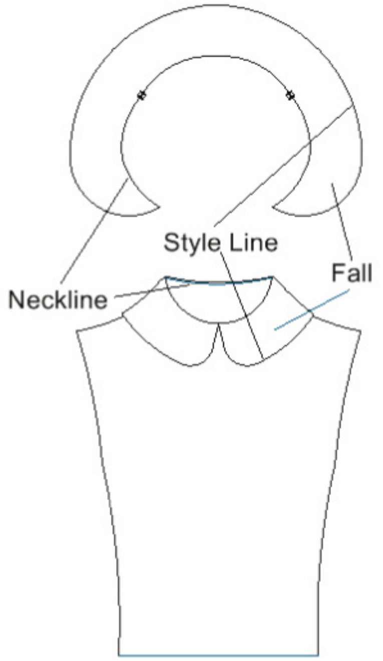
Fall: The visible portion of the collar that falls back down over the collar stand.

Style Line: The outer edge of the collar that defines the design of the collar and where trim may be added.

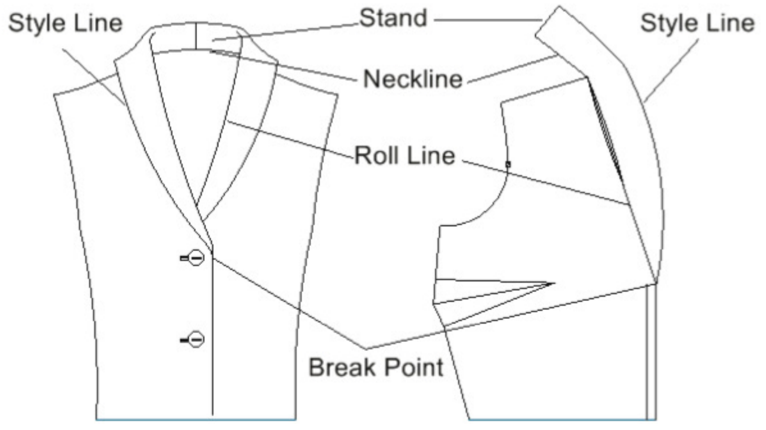
Roll Line: The actual point along which the roll appears when collar is being worn. It may be imaginary or pressed into a flat edge.

Break Point: Indicates the point where the lapel or revere, which is cut on the bodice, starts to fold back to form the lapel.

For more inspiring colour blocking ideas, check out my Collars and Necklines Pinterest Board at https://www.pinterest.com/wildgingersoft/collars-and-necklines/

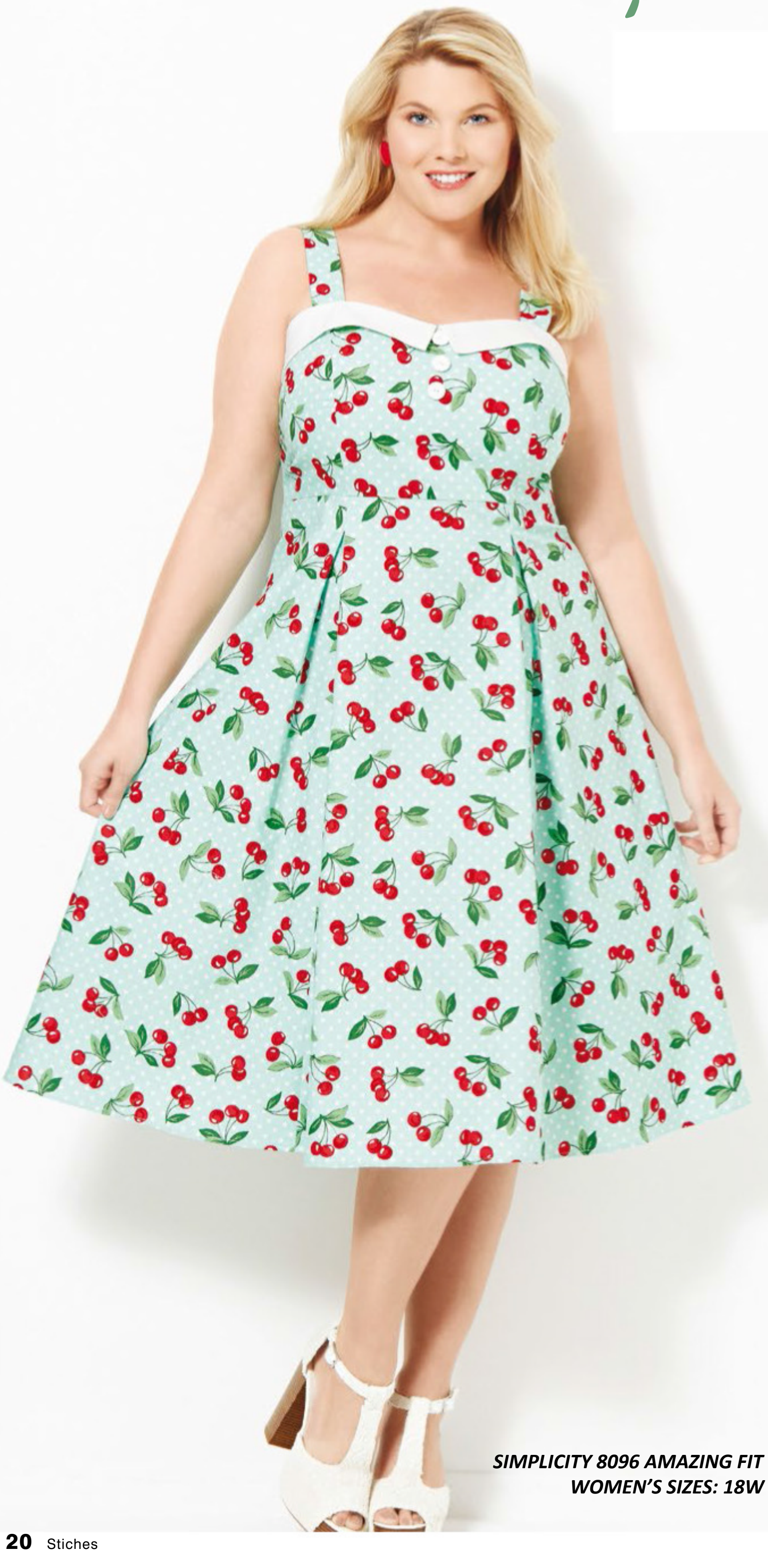

Style Line
Neckline
Fall

Flat Collar

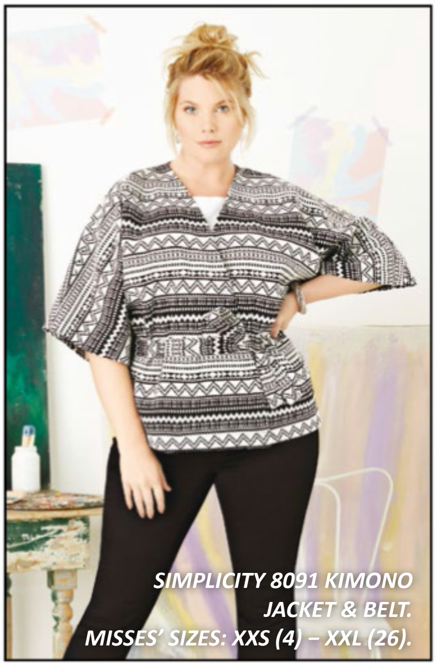

Style Line
Stand
Style Line
Neckline
Roll Line
Break Point

Shawl Collar

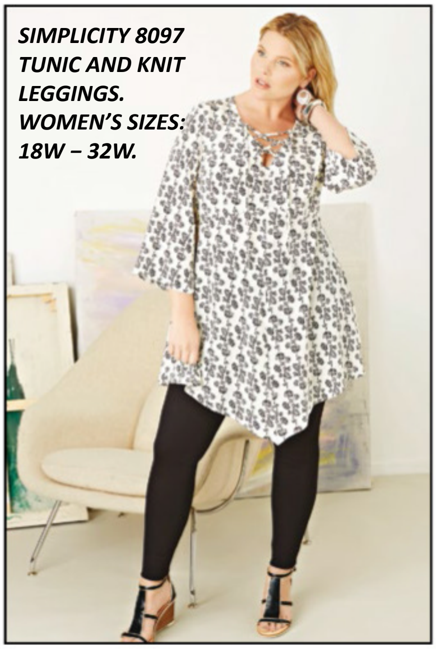
The Best Shape-Wise Finds



SIMPLICITY 8096 AMAZING FIT DRESS.
WOMEN'S SIZES: 18W – 32W.



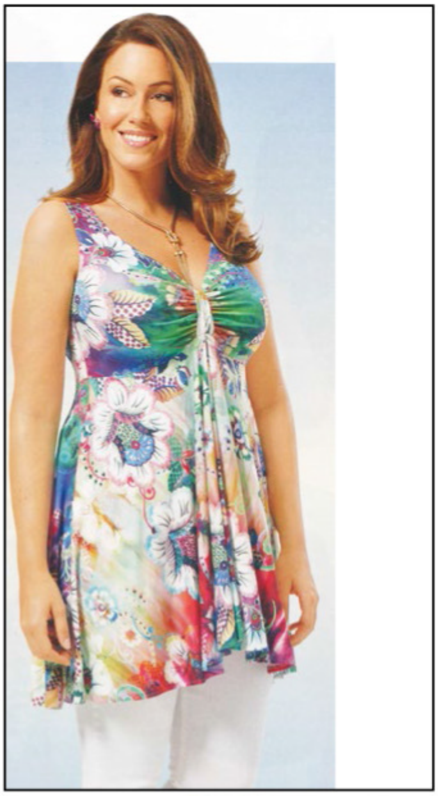
SIMPLICITY 8091 KIMONO
JACKET & BELT.
MISSES' SIZES: XXS (4) – XXL (26).

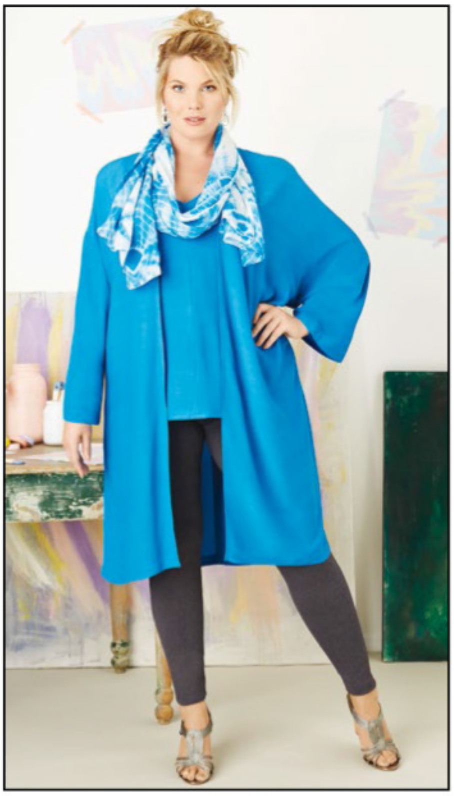


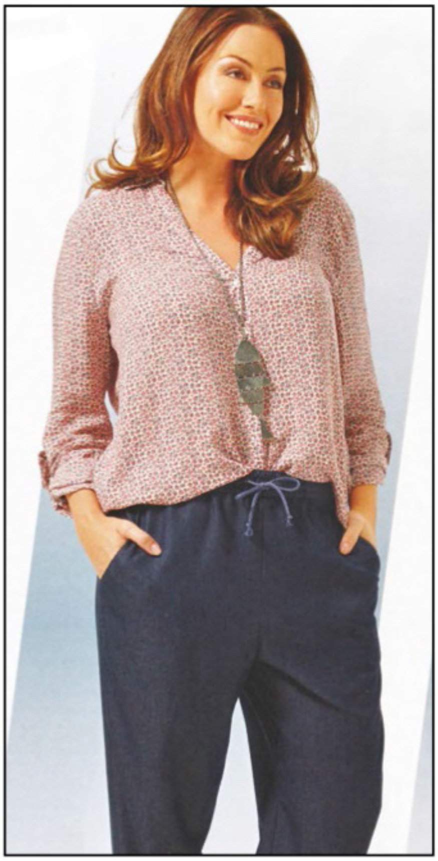
SIMPLICITY 8097
TUNIC AND KNIT
LEGGINGS.
WOMEN'S SIZES:
18W – 32W.

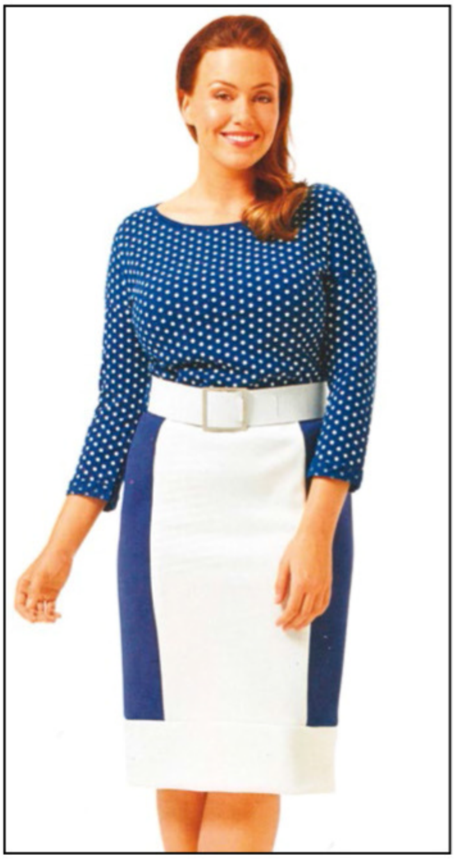
If You're Curvy/Full Figured

- Curvy and voluptuous figure types should take advantage of the strong 'vintage glamour' trend this season. Fabulous '50s inspired full-skirted looks with fitted bodices and sweetheart necklines just beg for va-va-voom curves (note the Simplicity dress in the main image on the facing page has a princess lined, softly pleated skirt rather than hip-widening gathers)!
- When it comes to what's on top, go easy … with kimono wrap jackets in graphic/tribal patterns or the loose, button-free duster coat (newer than a trench!) in a shot of strong colour over black. Simple lines and minimal detailing make these loose, easy shapes wearable for the fuller figure.
- Tunics get a very fashionable makeover – with deep V-necks (sometimes filled in with criss-cross lacing, as in the Simplicity tunic on the facing page), irregular hems or with very flattering gathering and draping at the centre-front bodice, as in the summer-y Burda Plus top in the upper left inset.
- The relaxed drawstring 'Athleisure' pant can look great on fuller figures if you don't get too loose in the leg (think slightly slouchy, not sloppy!), as in the great Burda Plus style at left. Casually roll up those hems and wear with fabulous heeled sandals to balance out that slouchy shape.
- Prefer a pencil skirt, but worried about wearing such an unforgiving shape? As with the dresses we showed in Wear What When, darker panels on the side streamlines any shape!



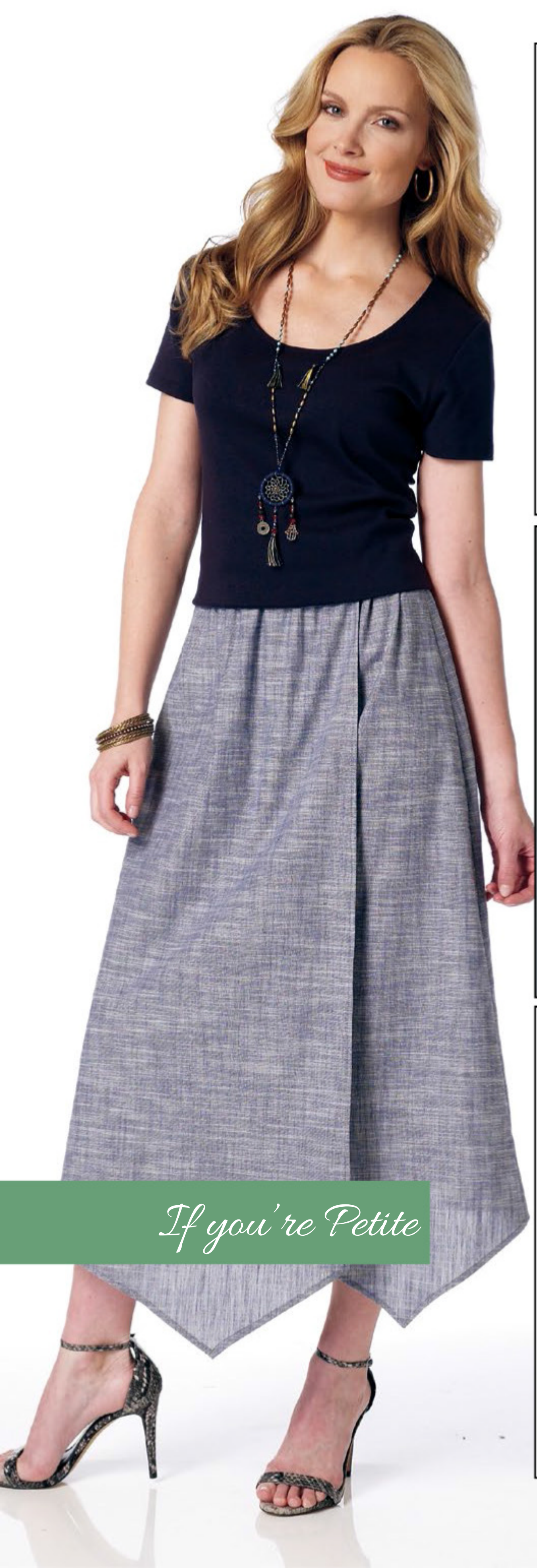


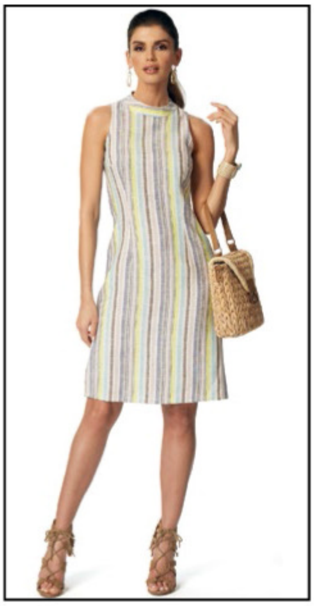


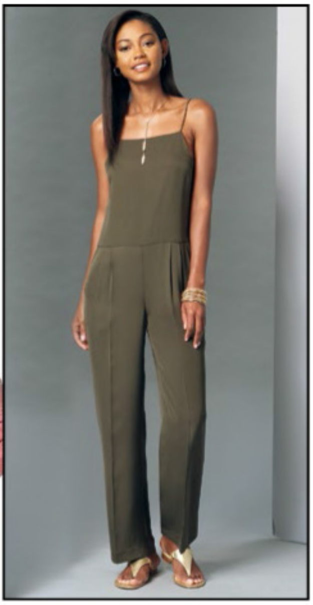


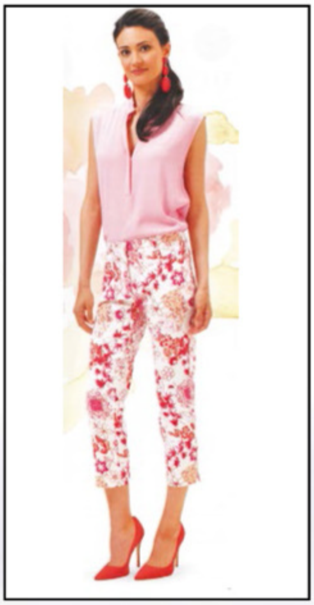
Top Left: BURDA PLUS 6674 JERSEY TUNIC TOP. WOMEN'S SIZES: 44 – 56.
Top Right SIMPLICITY 8097 JERSEY KIMONO DUSTER COAT, TOP & KNIT LEGGINGS. WOMEN'S SIZES: 18W – 32W.
Bottom Left: BURDA PLUS 6678 DRAWSTRING PANTS. WOMEN'S SIZES: 44 – 56.
Bottom Left BURDA PLUS 6679 SKIRT. WOMEN'S SIZES: 46 – 60.

If you're Petite









- When it comes to dresses, a slick, simple shift without any extraneous detail looks best, as in the Very Easy Vogue design (at left). Its subtly cutaway shoulders promote the long, vertical lines you're after, especially in the season's stripes!
- Where possible, try to stick to one tone top-to-toe to visually lengthen your lines. Fashion's favourite jumpsuit (as in the McCall's style at left, specially sized for petites!) makes that easy. It's also a breeze to accessorize! Go casual with a pendant and metallic sandals, or dress it up with statement mules and an eye-catching clutch.
- Like those longer lengths but fear that they may swamp you? A wrap skirt with a pointed or irregular hemline lightens up the look, as in the Butterick beauty in the main image at right, and can actually give the illusion of added inches to your height!
- Even though cropped pants have been seen as a no-no for you, why not try those crops at the lower calf, or even a few inches above the ankle? With a pair of heels, they can actually make your legs look longer if you get the proportion right. Also, don't be afraid of prints, as even boldly coloured ones can work in the right (slightly smaller) scale, as in the Burda Petites pants at the bottom-left inset.

Main Image: BUTTERICK B6346 'SEE & SEW' MOCK WRAP SKIRT. MISSES'/ MISSES' PETITE SIZES: 8 – 22.
Top: VERY EASY VOGUE V9184 DRESS. MISSES'/MISSES' PETITE SIZES: 6 – 22.
Middle: McCALL'S M7394 JUMPSUIT. MISSES'/MISSES' PETITE SIZES: 6 – 22.
Bottom: BURDA MISS PETITE 6668 PANTS. SIZES: 16 – 21.

- You probably know that flared is your best friend … but it doesn’t stop there! There are other details you should pay attention to if you’re wearing a flared dress or skirt. Forsake gathers or excessive pleating for a smoothly hipped silhouette, where the flare is in the actual cut, as in the McCall’s dress at right and in the top inset at left.
- Go for line lengthening details such as vertical seaming or a raised waist piece in a contrasting print to divert attention upward, as in the charming New Look style in that top inset.
- Don’t think you can wear pants? Think again! Forget skinnies (which are – finally – on the wane) and go for a more flattering – and fresher! – flared leg that balances out your frame. The ‘Amazing Fit’ design by Simplicity at left has a subtle flare that doesn’t look at all retro, and also comes in plus sizes to 28!
- Don’t forget details that make a difference up top. Shoulder baring necklines are the hottest look this season, and shoulders are usually the most defined part of your body, so show them off in clever cut-outs in an otherwise loose, easy dress that keeps all the attention up top (Butterick’s ‘cold shoulder’ style in the bottom inset is a great option!). Necklines that cut across your shoulders are another great figure-balancing strategy that emphasize your upper body.

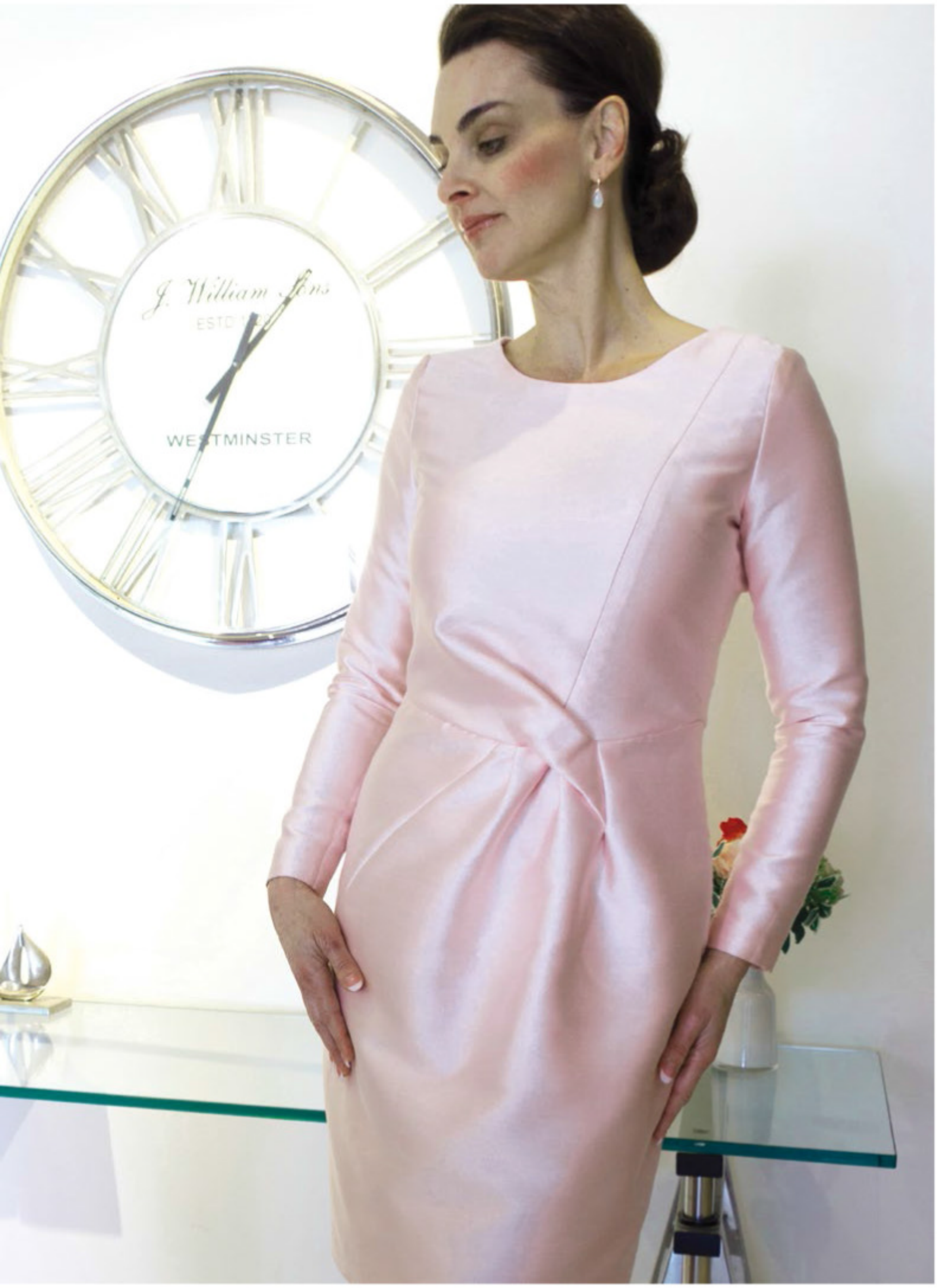
Main Image: McCALLS M7349 DRESS.
MISSES’/MISSES’ PETITE SIZES: 6 – 22.
Top: NEW LOOK 6447 DRESS. MISSES’ SIZES: 8 – 20.
Middle: SIMPLICITY 8056 ‘AMAZING FIT’ PANTS.
MISSES’/PLUS SIZES: 10 – 28W.
Bottom: BUTTERICK B6350 DRESS.
MISSES’ SIZES: 4 – 26.

If you’re Pear Shaped

Elegant in Pink

By Alison Wheeler

With its flattering, asymmetrical lines and interesting front pleat detail, Vogue V9148 makes a versatile wardrobe piece.



The description on the pattern envelope states that it is intended for medium knits only. However, by making a woven toile for fitting, any necessary pattern alterations can be made so that the fit is adjusted to accommodate a woven fabric (see Vol 25 No 1 for details of how to make and use a toile). The only changes needed for this garment were a little more width across the back and front at bust level.

The fabric is Italian silk and polyamide was purchased at Alla Moda Fabric Collection in Brisbane. It is a most unusual fabric – the warp threads are artificially manufactured polyamide (an extremely fine fibre sold as nylon in all parts of the world) and the weft threads are silk woven in an intricate diagonal twist pattern. It is beautifully soft with a slightly springy hand and is resistant to creasing.

The dress has been underlined with a silk and cotton blend to support the fabric and minimise the seam shadows which occur when using a plain fabric in a pale colour.

Underlining and Marking (especially intersecting points and pleats on front)

This garment is a perfect candidate for underling and, while it is a relatively simple style, meticulous marking is needed to ensure that the diagonal lines align perfectly and that the unusual attachment of the front bodice to the front skirt section is easily accomplished. Pleats in the skirt also need to be accurately positioned.

The garment has only the sleeves cut from double fabric. The remaining pieces were cut single layer and the fabric pieces (with pattern still attached) placed on grain on the underlining fabric which was then cut; this ensured accuracy in grain and fabric edges.

Stranded embroidery floss is excellent for thread marking as it is quite weak (2 strands only at a time) and easy to remove. All fabric and underlining pieces were tacked together at the cut edges of each piece. See photo 1.

Sometimes the difference in weights of the fabric and the underlining can cause distortion at the garment hem. To alleviate this, a 25mm (1in) fold has been added to the underlining approximately 15cm (5¾in) above the finished hem. This creates a jump hem so the underlining will not pull against the garment fabric over time. The fold was added before the final tacking

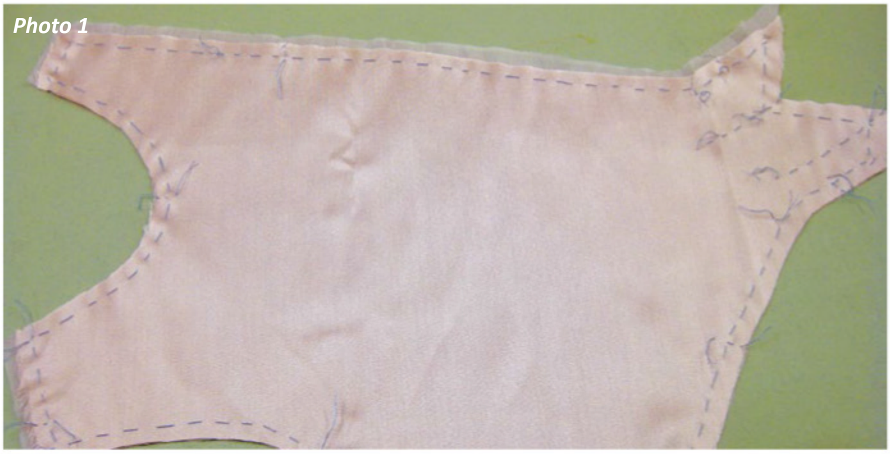


Photo 1

Photo 2

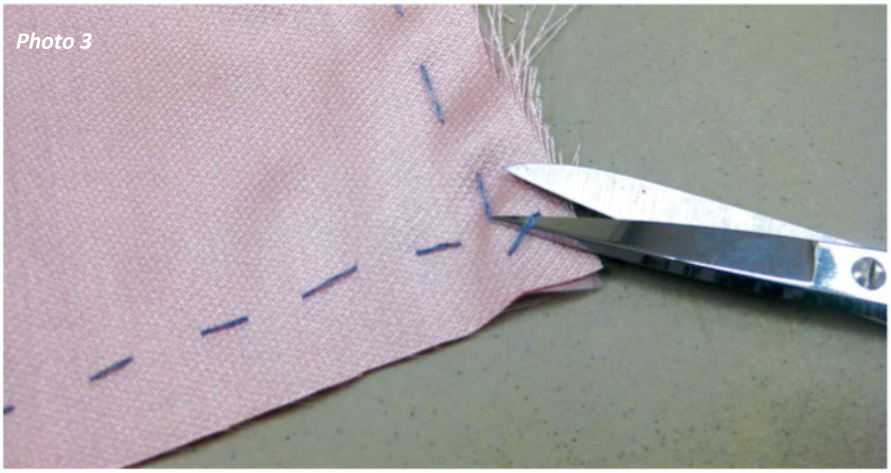


Photo 3

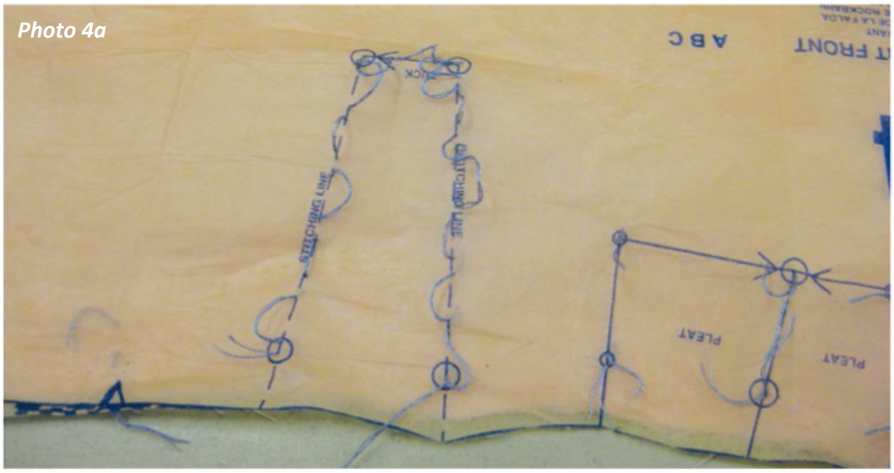


Photo 4a

Photo 4b

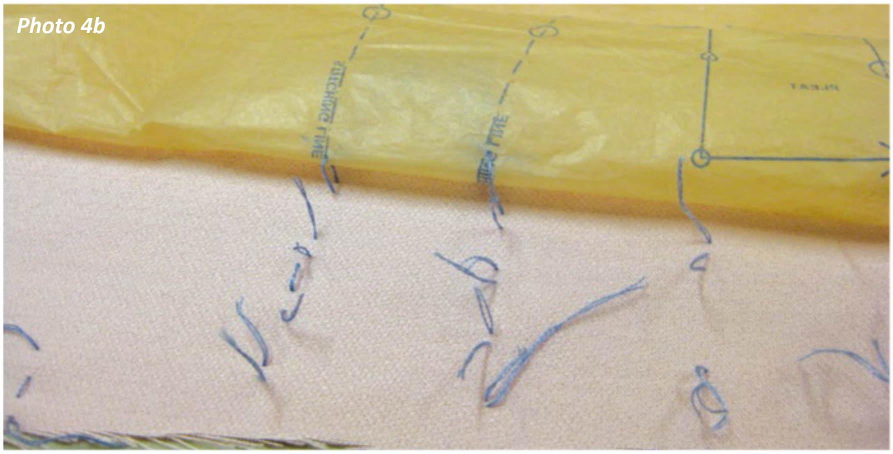


Photo 5

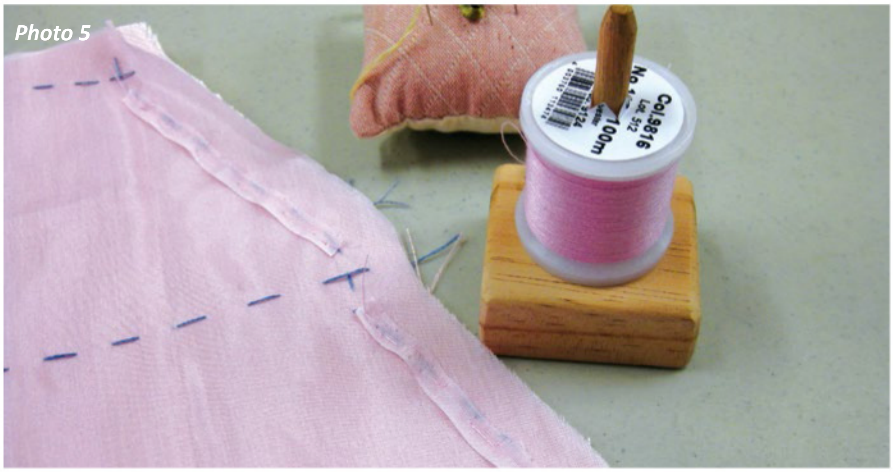


Photo 6

Photo 6b

of the underlining to each lower garment piece and to the sleeves. See photo 2.

Tip: Make a diagonal stitch when turning corners. This stitch can be snipped later for easy removal of individual sections during construction. See photo 3.

Notches are marked with short running stitches. Dart points and dots indicating the ends of pleats are marked with a single stitch tailor's tack. Continuous tailor's tacks have been used to mark the fold lines for pleats. See photos 4a and b.

To ensure layers of fabric stay together when sewing pleats and darts, a tacking stitch was applied down the centre of these elements. For later removal of the tacking, a pair of thread tweezers is a very helpful tool.

Staystitching and Stay Tape on Bias Seams

Machine staystitching using a small stitch length (1.5) was applied close to the seam line, directionally around the neckline. This was also done close to the diagonal seam lines to minimise stretching of bias grain when seams were pinned in place.

Narrow strips of lining selvage were tacked in place along diagonal seam lines and were permanently attached as seams were sewn. This will help the garment to keep its shape and avoid stretching in the skirt when it is being worn. See photo 5.

Finishing Darts

Darts have been sewn before being slashed open and edges catch-stitched to the underlining so that they remain flat and in securely in place.

Since the garment is not lined, a strip of straight grain lining fabric has been hand stitched over the opened darts. This gives a neat finish and prevents future fraying of the cut edges. See photos 6a and b.

Seam finish

The pattern instructions suggest that the front bodice seam is pressed towards the centre and diagonal seams and waist seam are pressed towards the top of the garment. This results in quite unattractive bulky ridges in all of these areas, especially when using a fabric with a springy hand and a shiny surface. A better way with this fabric was to bind all the seam edges with bias strips (Hong Kong finish) and gently press the seam allowances open. So that the seams remain open during the life of the garment, the seam edges have been catch stitched to the underlining. See photos 7a, b, and c. The result is lovely smooth lines on the right side of the garment.

Zipper

An invisible zipper has been inserted. Lining up the diagonal seam was rather tricky though. I usually attach one side of the zipper and mark the tape on the other side to make it easy to line up as the second side is stitched. However, with the diagonal

Photo 7a

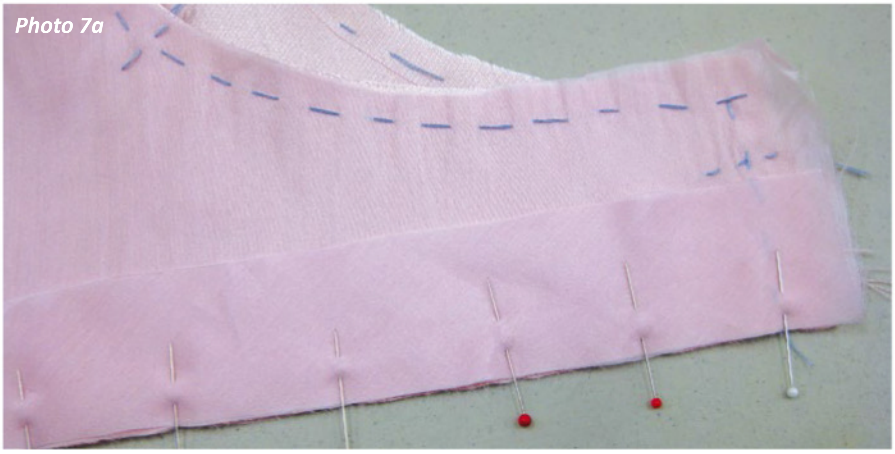


Photo 7b

Photo 7c

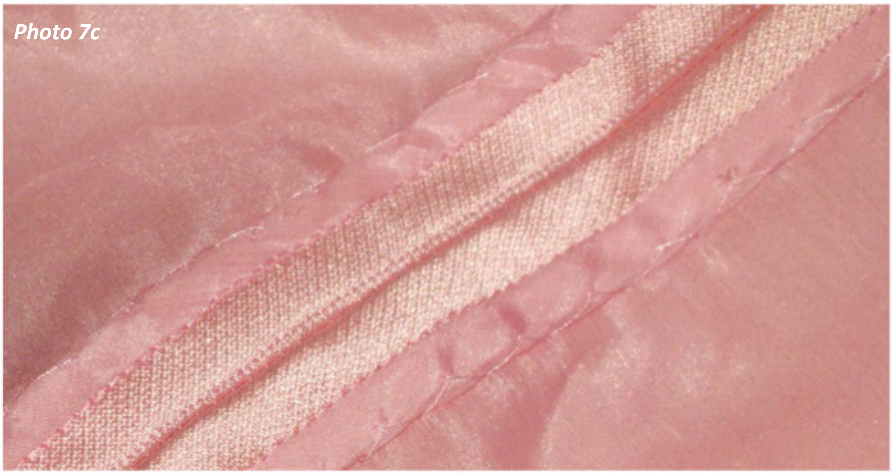


Photo 8a

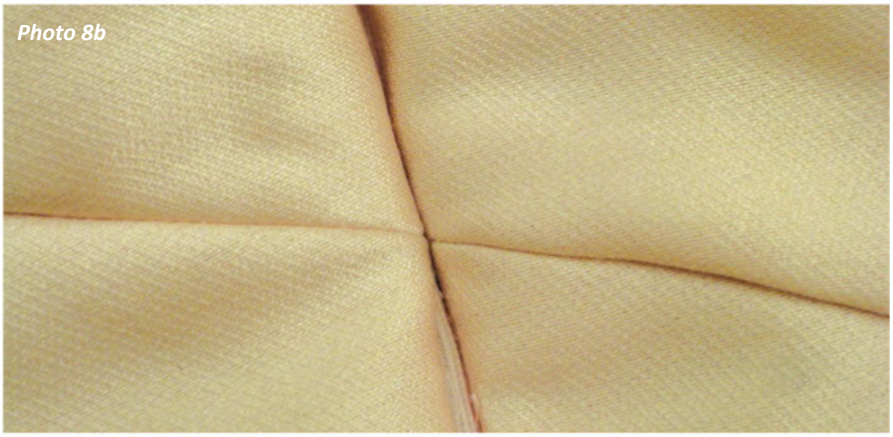


Photo 8b

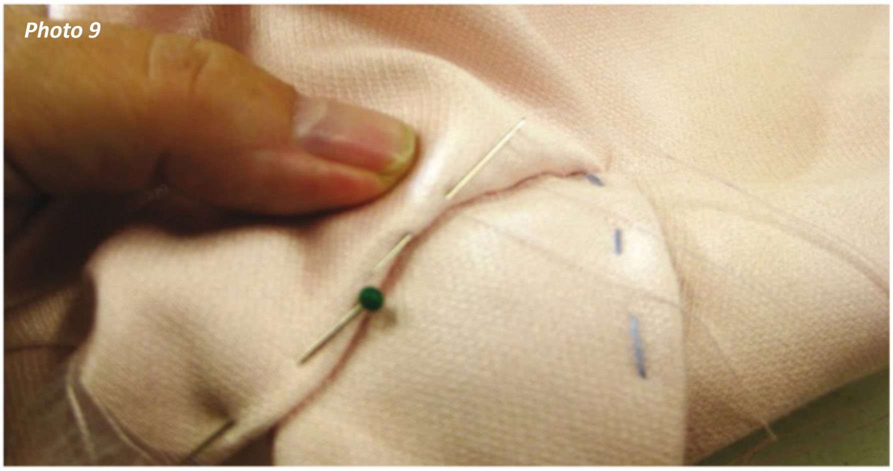


Photo 9

Front extension detail completed

Photo 10a

seam, the position of the seam line changes with the alignment of the roll of the fabric towards the zipper coil once the zip is sewn in place. See photo 8a. It took a couple of tries with tacking the second tape in place, before stitching, to gauge the exact position of the second side but the result was worth it. See photo 8b.

Pleats

The left front of the skirt features pleats at the waist. Careful marking made it quite easy to position the folds in the correct direction before the folds were tacked in place.

Tip: When folding pleats or tucks, it is important to remember that the directional arrows on the pattern apply to the fabric right side up. Thread marking makes accuracy so much easier.

The folded extension from the bodice is sewn into a pleat on the skirt. Positioning of this element is also critical. Once the end of the extension was pinned in place, it was fell tacked so that it would not move when stitched from the wrong side.

Fell tacking (sometimes called slip basting) is a very useful hand technique to control the exact positioning of fabric layers. The needle is inserted along the upper fold and then the piece to be joined, making sure that the needle penetrates right through all layers. See photo 9. Once the tacking is completed, an accurate stitching line has been marked on the wrong side of the fabric.

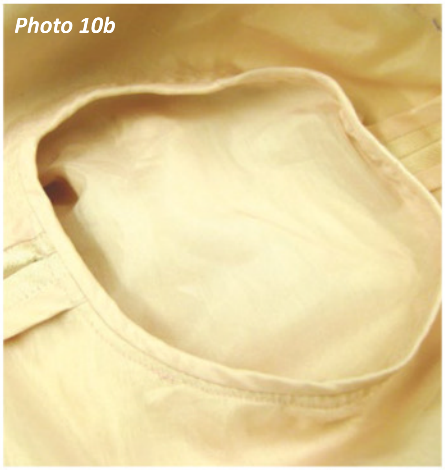


Photo 10b

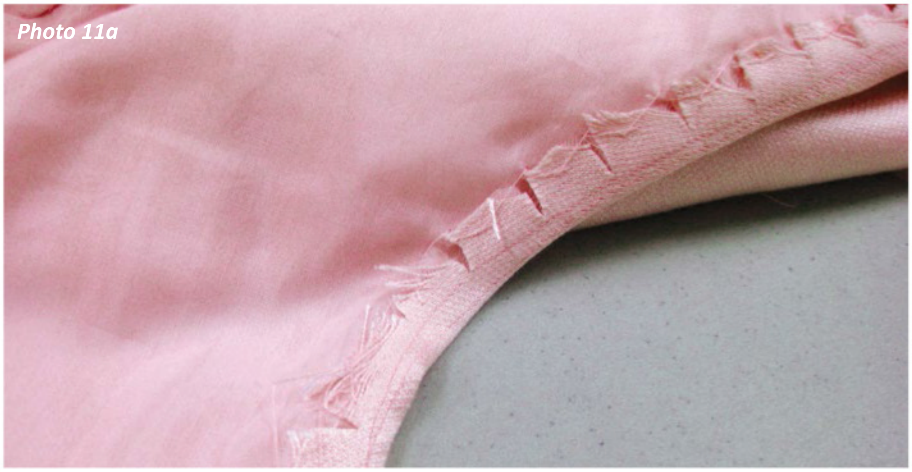


Photo 11a

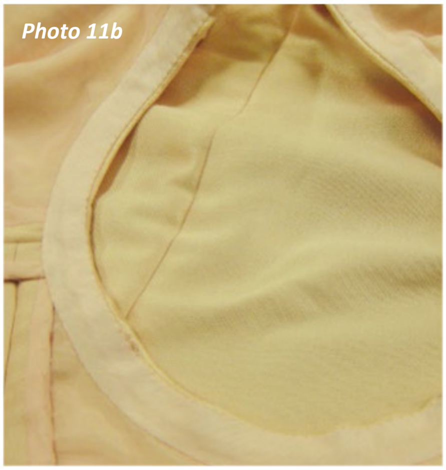


Photo 11b

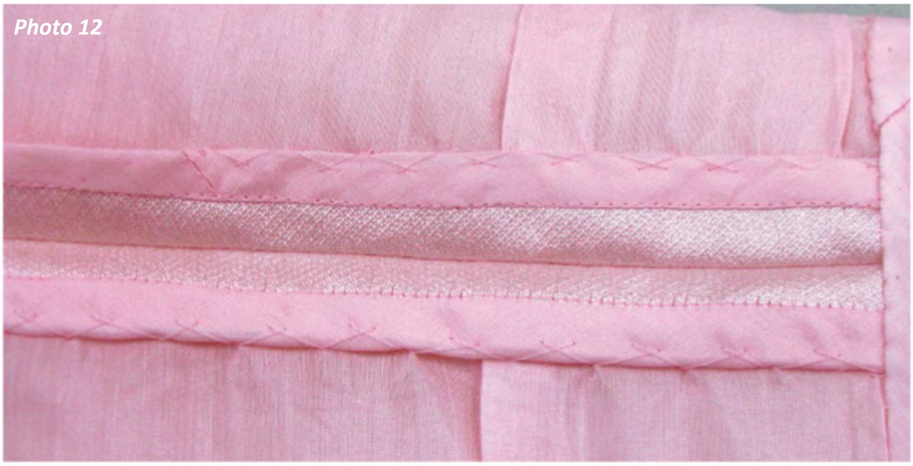


Photo 12

Sleeves

Sleeves were inserted and the armhole seam allowances finished with double binding, hand stitched in place. See photos 10a and b.

Neckline Finish

Facing pattern pieces are provided, however, to avoid show through on the finished garment, these have been replaced with bias binding made from the underlining fabric and applied by hand to give a softly rolled neckline finish. See photo11a and b.

Hems

The sleeve and skirt hems have also been finished with bias binding made from underlining fabric. See photo 12.

A Note on Pressing Specialty Fabrics

With a fabric such as this, careful 'soft' pressing is the key:

- A silk organza press cloth makes pressing much easier – it protects the fabric but allows visibility to see what is being done.
- All seam allowances, darts, tucks, etc. have been pressed using strips of Manilla folder between the layers of fabric to protect the front of the garment from marks which can result from overpressing.
- In many areas, just steam has been used to relax the fibres without the iron touching the fabric – hands are then used for a soft, gentle press to coax the fabric into position.
- Outer edges (neckline, sleeve and skirt hems) are steamed and hand pressed for a softly rolled finish.

NOTE: While not all of these techniques will be used with all projects or fabrics, I hope knowing how to get the best from special, and expensive, fabric will hopefully encourage anyone who is not familiar with these methods to give them a try. – Alison.

For more sewing techniques and information, visit Alison's blog at www.sewingladyblog.com
If you would like to contact Alison about her Sewing Classes Email: sewinglady@optusnet.com.au
Mobile: 0432 681 296 Or, catch-up on Facebook: www.facebook.com/alisonwheelerthesewinglady

Sewing Room Supplies – Part 1

By Susan Khalje

Susan thinks of herself as a pretty low-tech sewer, but that said, there are things that she really relies upon in her studio. We are sure you have your own favourites, but it's always fun to see what someone else likes to use – and why – so here's a look inside Susan's workroom!

Cutting

I don't do a huge amount of sewing (and therefore cutting), so I haven't gone the rotary cutter route (though I did use one years ago when I was working on a piping article for Threads Magazine. I did have to make miles of little bias strips. Perfect use for a rotary cutter). If I did more cutting, I'd probably use one regularly, but in the meantime, I rely on fabulous scissors. The following are essential:

- 4in large-handled embroidery scissors, by Gingher. I work with lace a lot, so these are perfect for making sharp cuts. Nothing's worse than not getting a clean cut, whether you're trimming lace or cutting into the corners of a bound buttonhole. If the cut is less than clean, you'll have to wiggle the blades around, trying to get a sharp line, and in so doing, the threads will start to come apart and you'll really compromise your results. And once a cut is less than clean, there's no going back. And I like the large finger hole – it's so much easier to get your thumb in and out of the scissors, which is something you need to do constantly.
- 5in tailor's points, also by Gingher. These are great – they've got a thick spine (the middle of the scissors, where the blades are joined), so they can cut through just about anything. Happily, they're nice and light, so they're perfect for big internal trimming jobs – the kind of cutting that would ruin your nice little 4in embroidery scissors. And your hand won't get tired, which is what would happen if you tried to trim things out with big shears.
- 8in micro-serrated shears. I love the Kai version – the movement in the hand is so easy – it makes cutting a pleasure. And the tiny serrations really grab slippery fabrics – silk chiffon and silk charmeuse will

never get away from you again! They're not inexpensive, but they're worth every penny in comfort and accuracy.

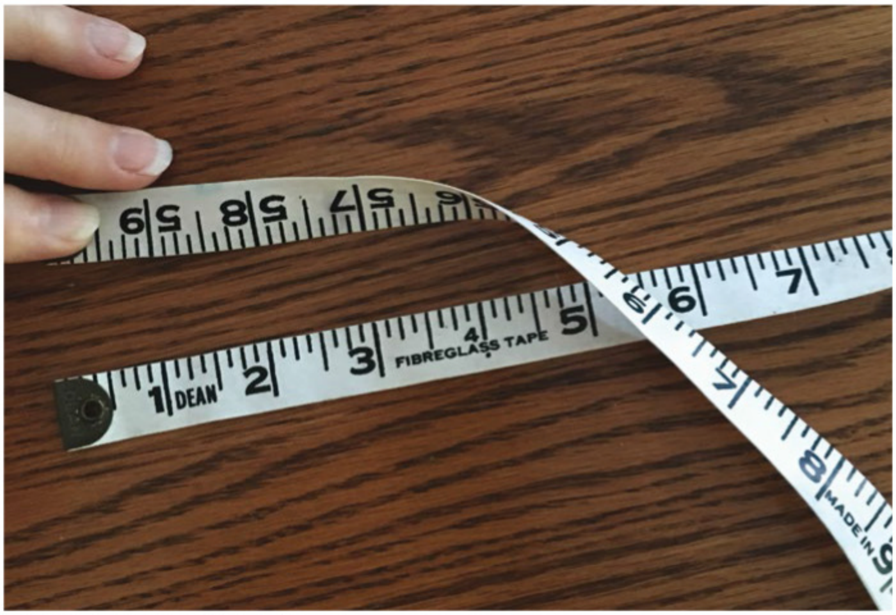
KAI 7240AS
OPTIMUM FOR ARAMID FABRICS

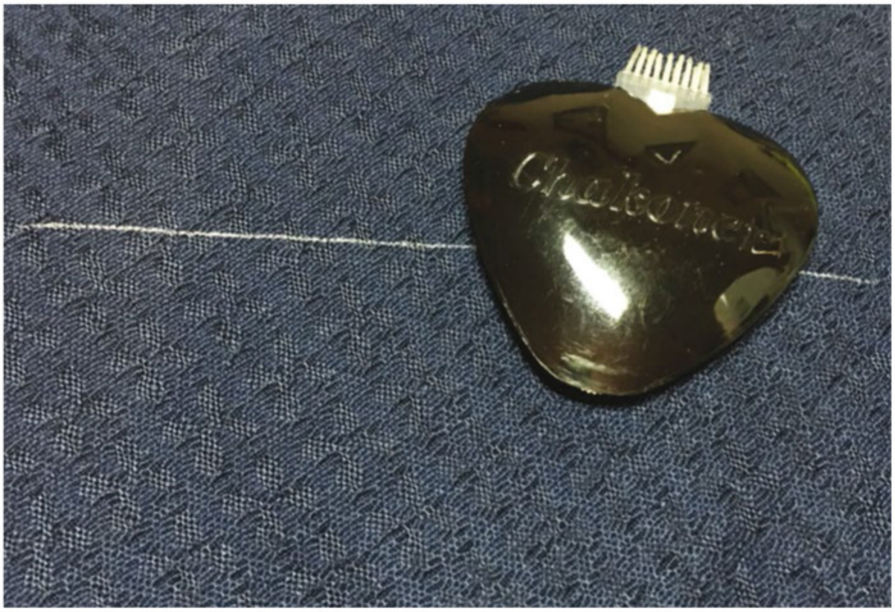
Essentials

- Tape measure. Of course, as you lay things out, you'll need to place them accurately, so get yourself a good tape measure. I like the kind that starts with inches (or centimetres) on each end – that way, regardless of which end you pick up, you've got the numbers you need. And you needn't get one that's overly long. Those are for making draperies (and I'm sure their length comes in handy then), but for day-to-day sewing, you don't want an enormously long tape measure cluttering things up and annoying you.
- A seam ripper is useful – just be sure to either get a new one frequently or replace the blade often; they seem to dull awfully quickly, and they're only effective if the blade is nice and sharp.

Marking

- I'm a huge fan of the old-fashioned wax tracing paper, and best of all is to have large sheets of it. When I worked in the couture house, we mounted them on big pieces of tagboard – that keeps you from having to fold the sheets to store them (which compromises their accuracy, as they don't want to lie flat after they've been folded) or unroll them (and try to keep them flat while you're using them). The 4 original colours (navy, red, yellow, and white) pretty much cover all the marking you'll need to do. Yes, you do have to be careful with it (once applied, it doesn't come off, and yes, those new heavily-



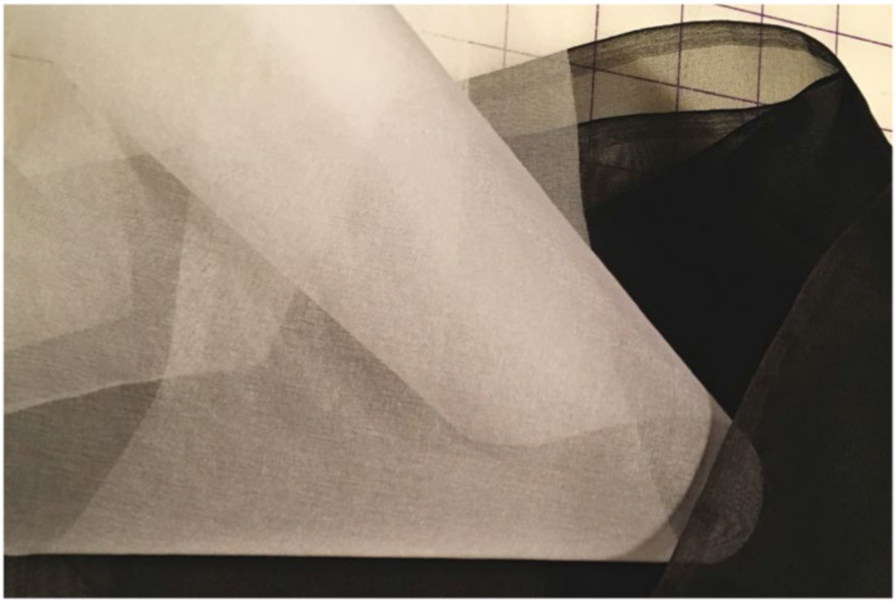


waxed sheets need to be handled carefully), but there's no substitute.

- You'll need a tracing wheel – there are many options, including ones with a pair of wheels (which I personally find confusing – if I see a line, it's a stitching line. If I see two lines, then I don't know which is which. I realize people use one for cutting, and one for stitching, but I still find it unclear). There are also tracing wheels that sort of obscure the wheel, which makes it difficult to see the wheel as you trace along. Since accuracy is what this is all about, you really want to see where the wheel hits the fabric. I prefer the serrated wheel (which really grips the fabric as you go along) as opposed to the smooth-edged wheel. In the world of couture, lots of marking is done, so you want something that's comfortable in your hand.
- There are a number of rolling markers out there (there's a tiny wheel at the base of the marker, pretty much hidden inside, and once rolled, it applies a fine line of chalk). The point is to apply the mark without shifting the underlying fabric; so many of these markers have rough wheels, which seem to get stuck on the fabric as they roll. In my experience, the Chakoner does the smoothest job of marking the fabric without moving it. You can get different colours of chalk, but I find that they can leave a residue. It's pale, but I prefer not to take a chance, so I only ever use white chalk.

Fabrics

It's not a bad idea to stock a few fabrics, too. My theory is that if you have the right things in stock, you'll use them – if you don't, then you'll



either do without (not a great idea) or use something that's not quite right (not a great idea, either).

- Muslin – Not only is it great for patternmaking (I know it's time-consuming, but a muslin mock-up of a garment you're considering making really is the way to go), it can be used as an underlining, too. I don't use anything that's too wide – I find it a bit cumbersome, especially as it has to be steamed before you use it – so I use the 45in wide version.
- Silk organza – the workhorse of the couture atelier – truly. It's used all the time as an underlining, and occasionally as a fashion fabric, too. It's important to get the right kind – some silk organza is too slippery (you want a little bit of grip), some are way too rough and loosely woven. Whilst you could stock different colours, I make do with keeping black and white on hand. Much of the time, colour doesn't matter, and in my experience, coloured organza can get slippery. I'm not sure if they go through some sort of extra finishing step, as a part of the dyeing process, but in my experience they lose some of their 'grip' and get too slippery. As long as it doesn't show through, it's not necessary to go to the ends of the earth to find hunter green organza to go with hunter green crepe. It won't be seen, and it'll probably be slippery to the point of losing its nice firm grain, which will be not only annoying, but difficult to control, and your results may be compromised.

Next issue, we'll look at hand-sewing and pressing supplies.

While you may have your own resources, all of the above are available from www.SusanKhalje.com

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Contour Waistlines

The contour waistline has been a fashion focus for several seasons but it is also a great alternative to a waistband for the short-waisted woman, as it sits below the natural waistline.

Fitting a contour waistband

A pattern's contour waistband curve may not match your curves. To fit, try on the pattern tissue.

1. If you do not have a full front and back pattern piece, make one so you can fit both sides of your body.
2. Pin the side seams together with the seams on the outside.
3. Alter the pattern to fit your shape.

- If your waist is larger than the pattern measurement, slash the tissue from the top to – but not through – the bottom in several places and spread it. Have someone else help you. Tape over the slashes right to your body to hold the spread. See diagram 1.
- After altering, take off the waistband and place it on tissue. The tape will stick. Add more tape as necessary and trim away the excess tissue.
- If your waist is smaller than the pattern, slash from the top and lap the pattern pieces. Pin or tape. See diagram 2.
- If your high hip/tummy area is larger than the pattern, slash from the bottom and spread. Tape. See diagram 3.
- If your high hip/stomach area is smaller than the pattern, but the waist fits, slash from the bottom up and lap. Pin or tape. See diagram 4.

REMEMBER: Pattern alteration need not be daunting, and altering for perfect fit is a personal procedure that gets easier with repetition and experience.

Diagram 1

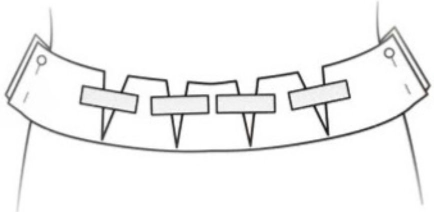


Diagram 2

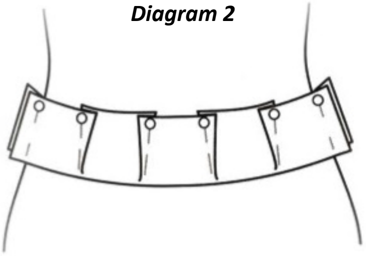


Diagram 3

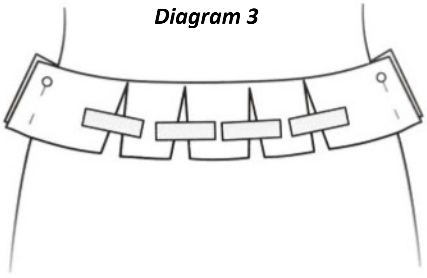
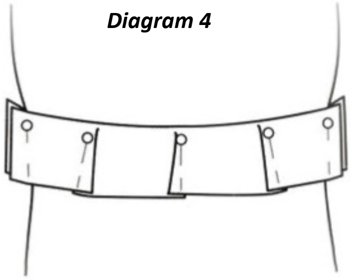


Diagram 4



How to Transfer A Bust Dart Location

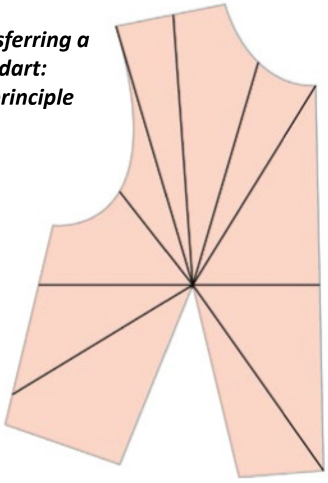
By Megan Nielsen

One of the things Megan loves about pattern drafting is the math of it. The pure geometry of manipulating flat patterns brings her so much joy. When she first began to delve into flat pattern making, she remembers being blown away by the principles of dart manipulation – and today it's still one of her favourite elements to explore.

The basic crux of it is this: a dart can be transferred to any position around the pivotal point of the bust, without altering the fit of the garment.

Why is this a big deal? It means that if you have a pattern of which you love everything except the dart positioning, you can change it. You can move that dart pretty much anywhere as long as it is pivoting around the bust point.

Transferring a bust dart: the principle



This can be a real game changer if there is a particular dart position you hate – or if you have a larger than average bust size, as doing a full bust adjustment at the waistline is much easier than the centre front.

Let's have a look at it in practice with an example. Here is how you would transfer the dart on a basic bodice block from the waistline to the side seam.

The process is quite simple.

You mark a point 1in (2.5cm) beyond the dart apex, and draw lines extending to the dart legs at the seamline.

Cut this section out.

Draw the position of your new dart, beginning at the bust point and ending at the seamline.

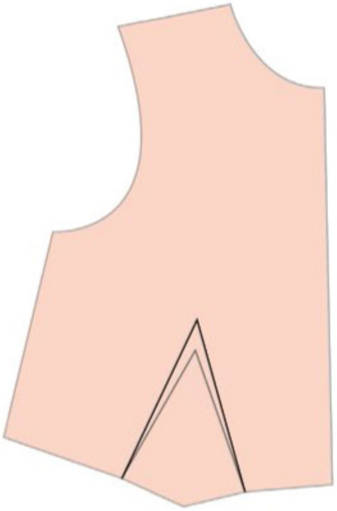
Cut from the seamline towards the bust point, leaving a small amount of paper left to allow you to pivot the paper. Pivot the wedge you have created to close the old dart and tape it closed.

Mark the dart apex 1in (2.5cm) in from the bust point, and draw the dart but extending lines to the edges of the side seam.

Add additional paper behind the dart and tape it to the pattern to close the gap. Fold the dart as you

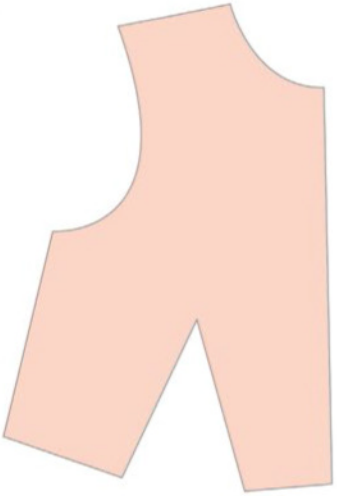
Transfer a waist dart to a bust dart

1



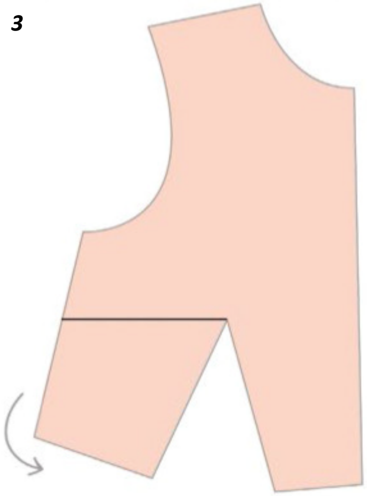
Mark a point 1in above the dart apex

2



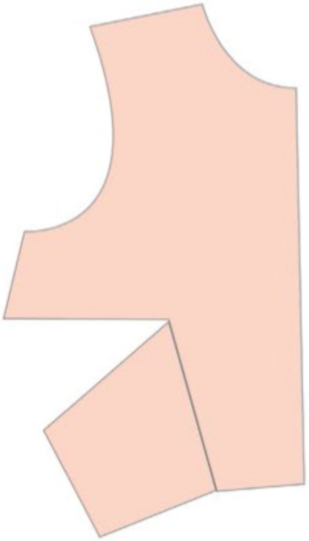
Bodice pattern with bust pivot point

3



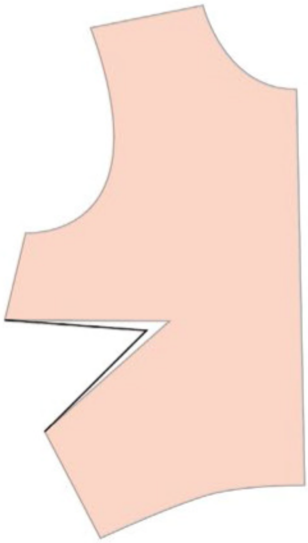
Draw the new dart position

4



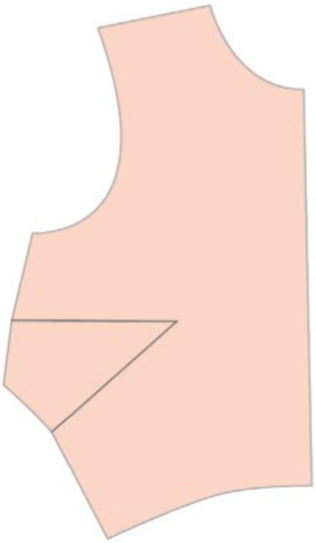
Pivot till the old dart is closed

5

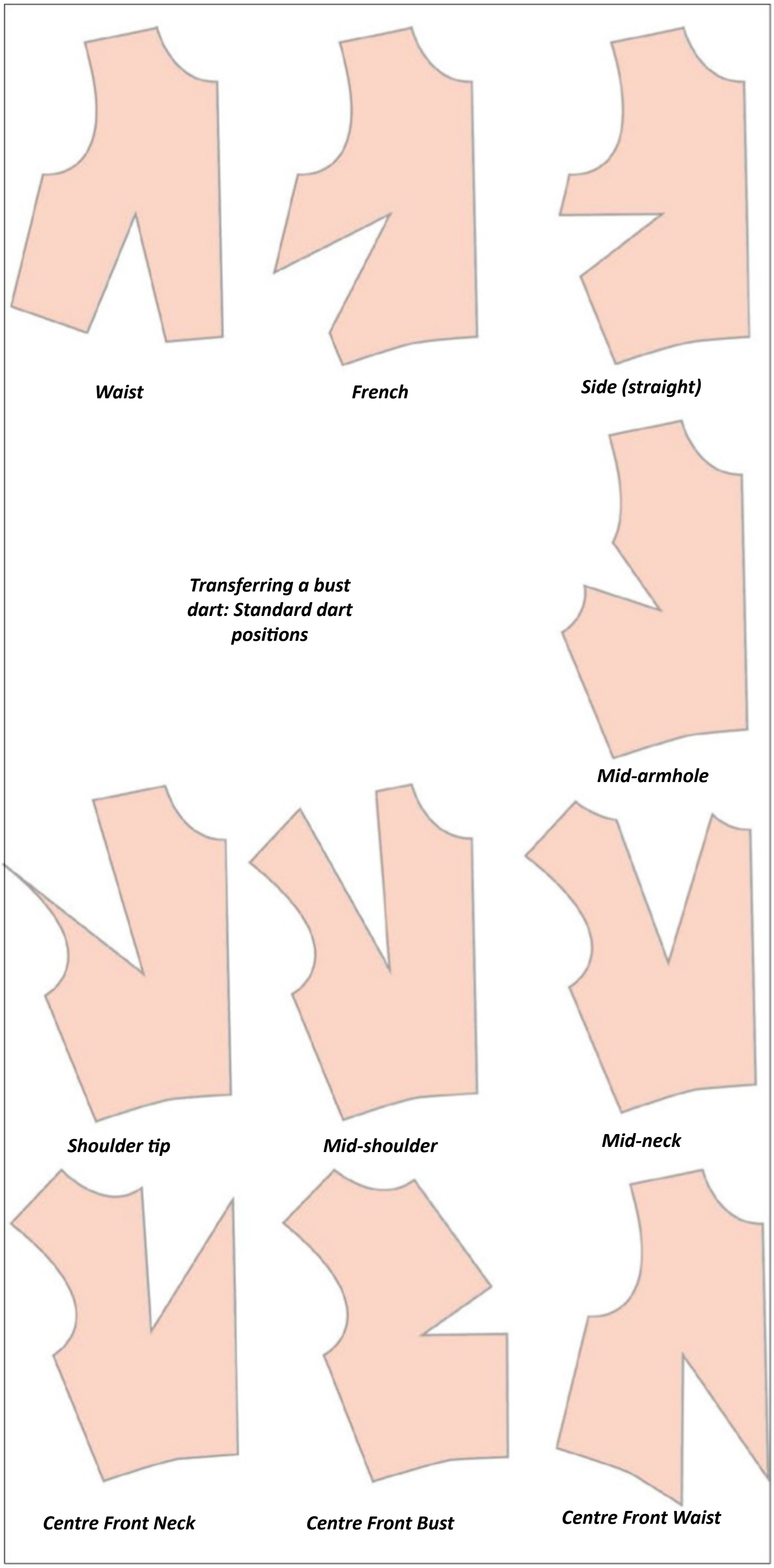


Redraw the dart 1in from the bust point

6



Blend seam line and true the dart



Waist

French

Side (straight)

Mid-armhole

Shoulder tip

Mid-shoulder

Mid-neck

Centre Front Neck

Centre Front Bust

Centre Front Waist

Transferring a bust dart: Standard dart positions

would if it were fabric, and cut along the side seam to true the dart and blend the seamlines.

The surprising thing about this method is that it really isn't as hard as you might think, and only takes a few minutes with simple drafting supplies. Honestly, the possibilities are endless - you can really move that dart anywhere around the bust point (pivotal point), until you get the look you want.

As a guide, here is what the basic bodice block pattern would look like for different standard dart placements (see left page).

I hope you enjoyed learning how to transfer bust dart location! If you'd like to try this method with my Darling Ranges dress sewing pattern, and get 20% off the price of the pattern, simply use the code STITCHES at www.megannielsen.com ◈

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Denim is Back!

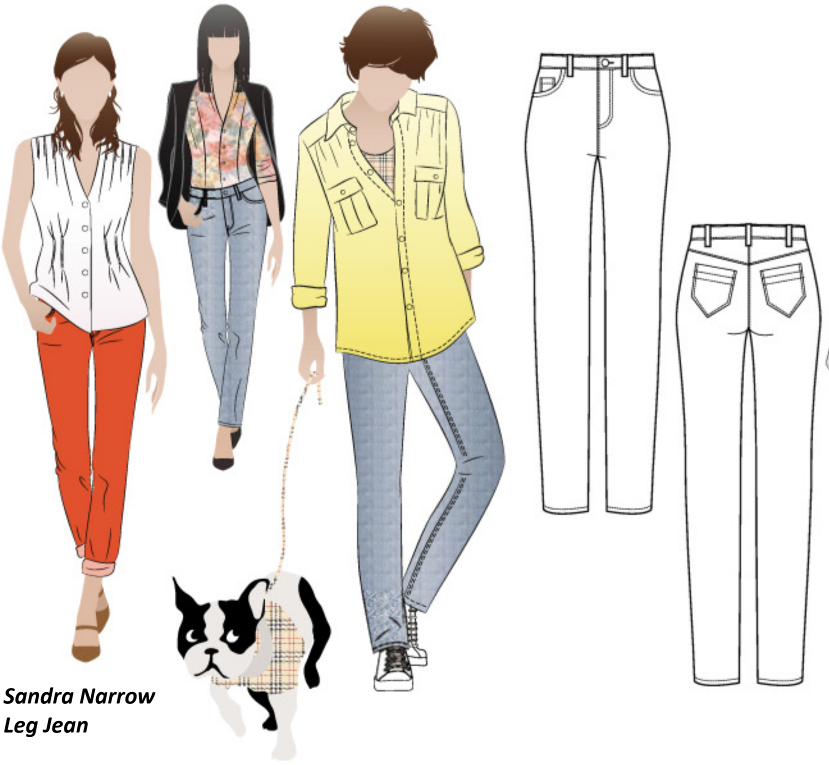
By Style Arc

Denim has always been a wardrobe staple; especially denim jeans. Originally sturdy workwear for miners, jeans have made their way into mainstream fashion. While the basic construction has remained the same, the jeans shape is constantly changing. Style Arc have many pattern choices, and with so many different looks to choose from, why not try your hand at making yourself some jeans. Once you have a pattern you love, with a fit that works, you can make them again and again!

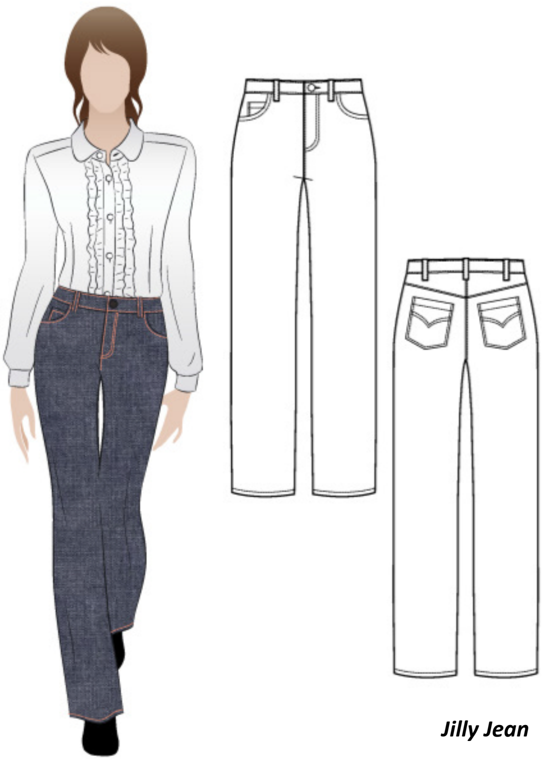
Back in the 1970s flares were all the rage. They sat high on the waist and had the famous wide leg. Over time, the waist dropped and the leg narrowed to become the hipster jean.

While hip-hugging skinny jeans have been popular in recent years, the popular jeans shapes are changing. This season we're seeing jeans sitting higher on the waist again; it's a style reminiscent of the 1970s jean. The leg is becoming looser and the fit more relaxed in what's become known as the 'boyfriend' jean.

Let's face it, jeans are not the simplest of garments to make! The double stitching, the pockets and zips make jeans a more challenging sewing project. Don't be scared though! There are plenty of online resources available to help you through making your first pair of jeans. You'll learn some valuable skills along the way! Jeans are a

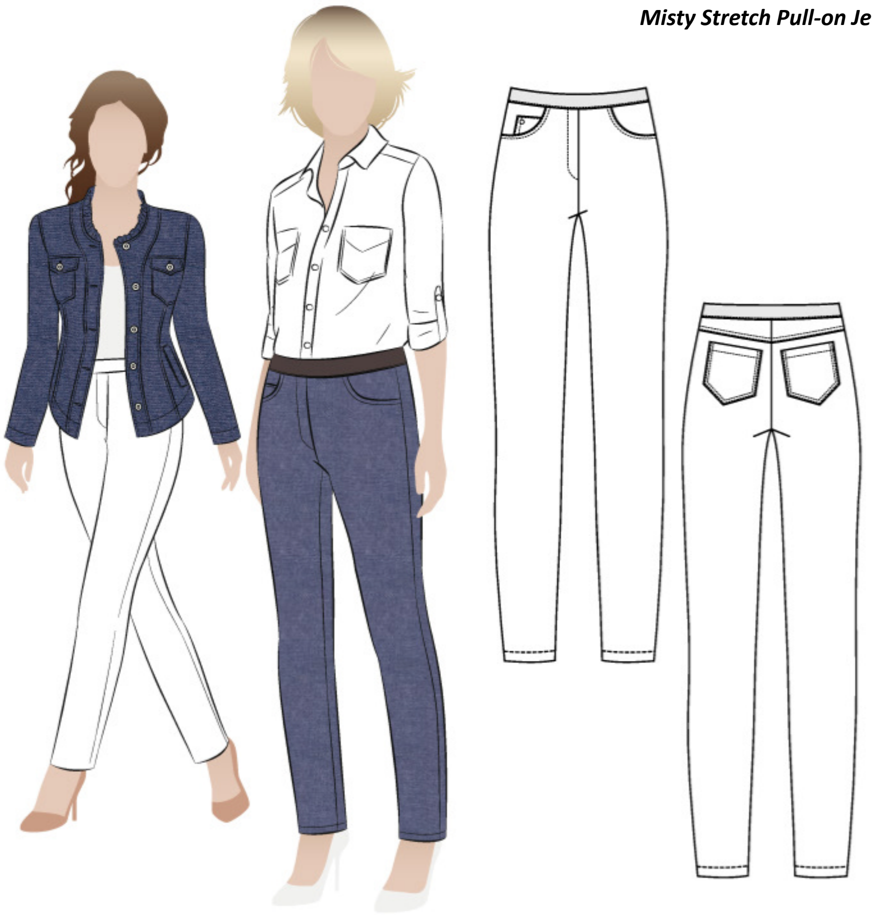


Sandra Narrow Leg Jean



Jilly Jean

Misty Stretch Pull-on Jean



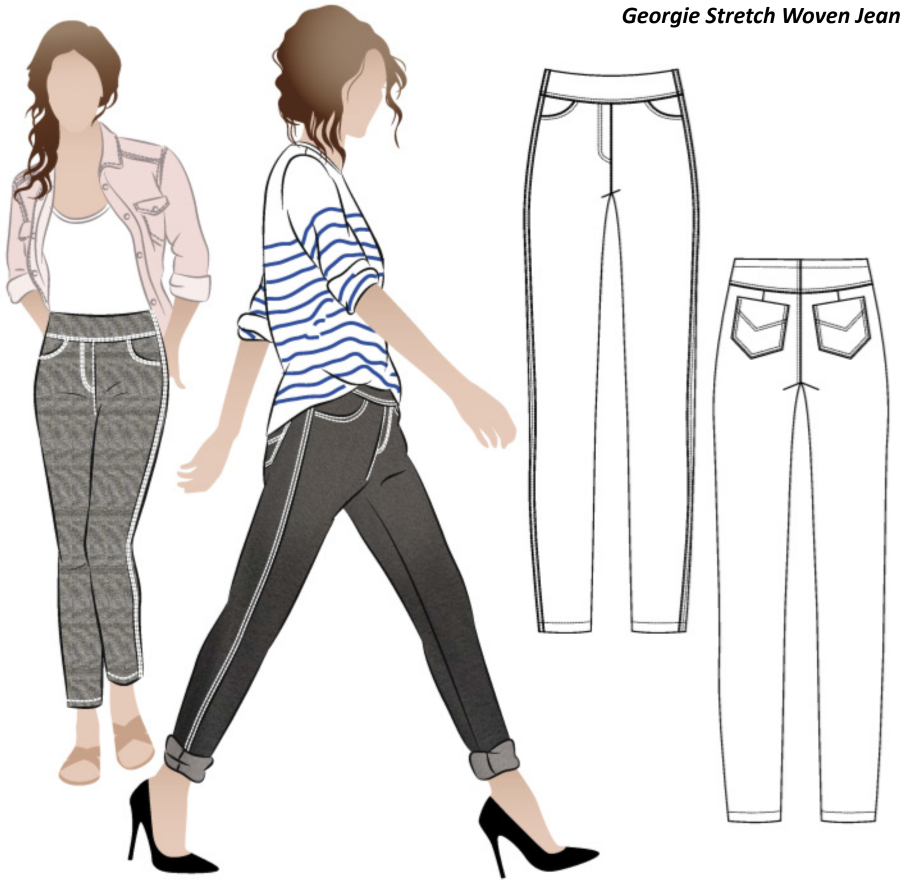
great canvas to showcase your creativity too. You can experiment with different decorative stitching patterns on the rear pockets, have some fun with print fabrics in the front pockets and use rivets for the genuine jeans look!

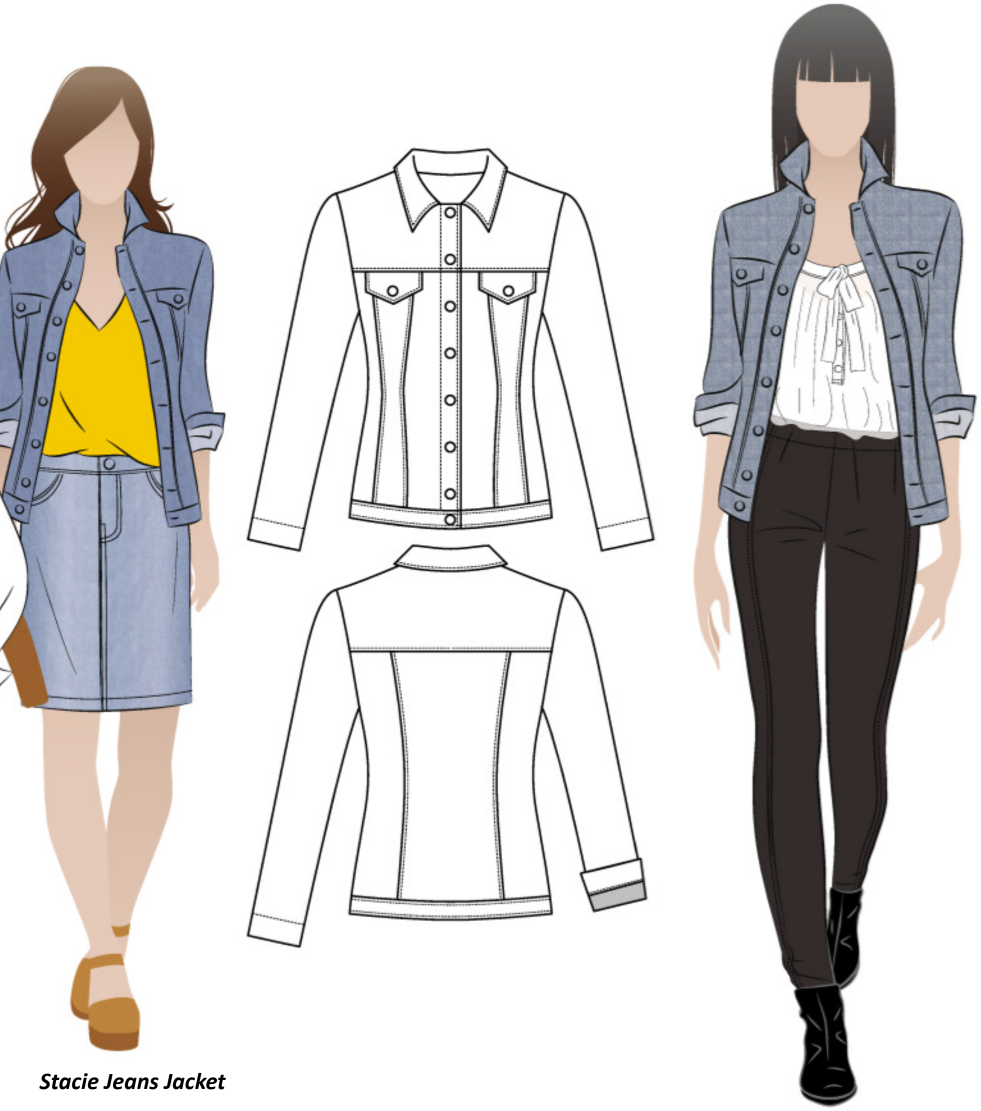
In the Style Arc range we have a few different styles for you to choose from. The *Sandra Narrow Leg Jean* is a great fitting slim-leg jean that sits on the high hip. It includes all the traditional jean features with a contoured waistband. For a classic straight-leg jean, the *Style Arc Jilly Jean* is a great option. It's designed for stretch denim but any stretch woven fabric would work!

The *Style Arc Misty Stretch Pull-on Jean* is a little different. It has the look of a slim jean but the comfort of a pull-on pant. This style features a slim cut leg, mock fly and pockets, and jean back pockets. The elastic waistband treatment makes this a comfortable yet stylish pull-on pant.

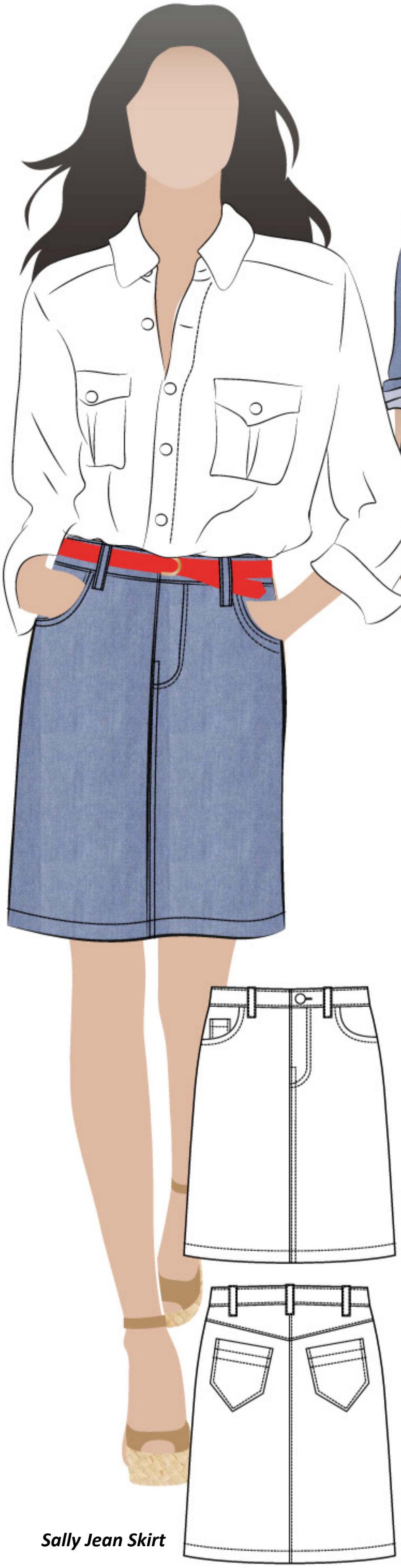
The *Georgie Stretch Woven Jean* features a waist yoke, which is flattering across the tummy. Aside from that, it's another fabulously comfortable pull-on jean with all

Georgie Stretch Woven Jean





Stacie Jeans Jacket



Sally Jean Skirt

the features you would expect in a pair of jeans.

Not interested in pants but still after that denim look? No problem! Why not try a denim jacket or skirt? In the Style Arc range there are a couple of styles on offer. The Stacie Jeans Jacket is a great denim jacket sitting on the high hip with flattering shaping through the body. The sleeve features a deep hem so it can be worn turned-up for a more casual look. If you're looking for a skirt, the Style Arc Sally Jean Skirt could be what you're after? This skirt has all the features of a jean skirt but with the comfort of a contoured waistband. It sits just above the knee and has a very slight A-lined shape.

With so many options, why not take the plunge and double up on denim? Whether you're looking at pants, skirts or jackets, jeans may not be the easiest style to make but if you stick at it and maybe follow some online advice, they can really improve your sewing skills!

For all the latest Style Arc paper patterns visit www.stylearc.com.au. For digital PDF patterns available for instant download, check out www.stylearc.etsy.com

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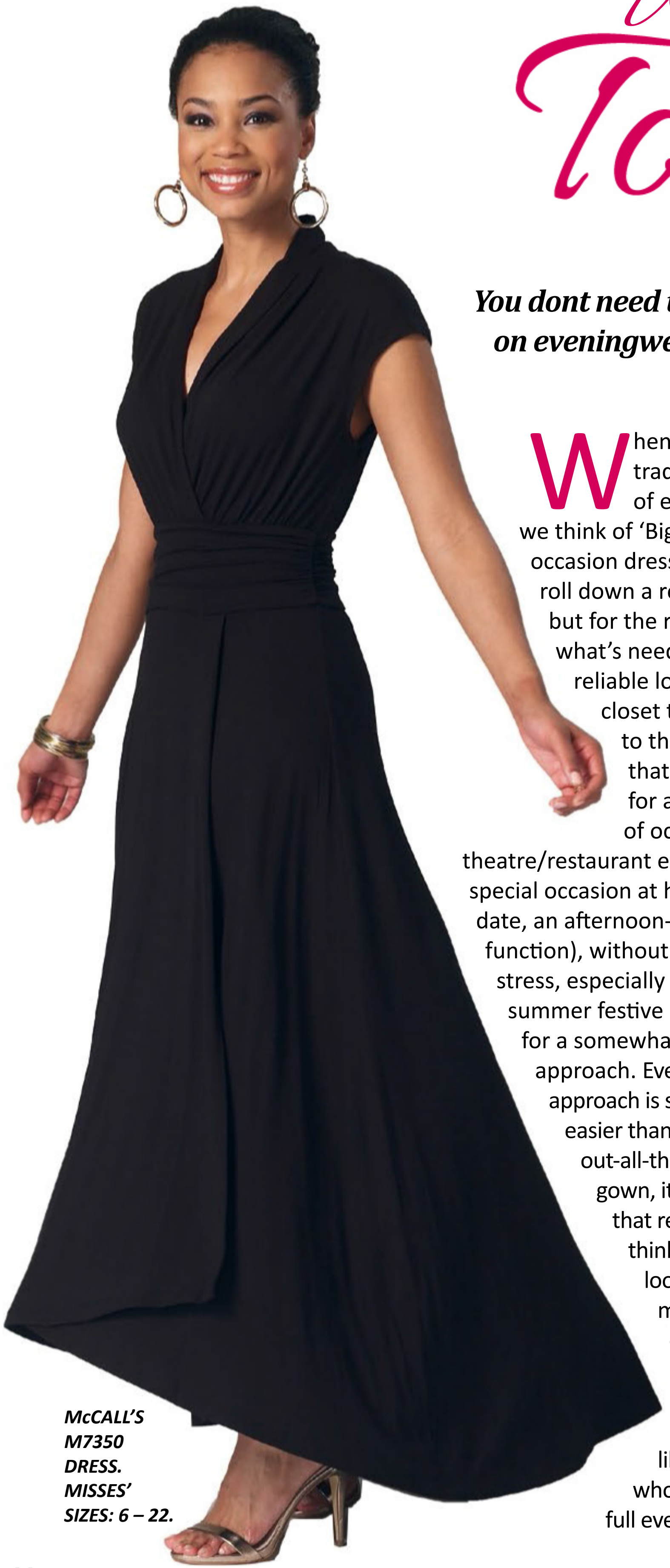
What To Wear Tonight

You dont need to go big and over the top when deciding on eveningwear. Here we tell you how easy it is to be ready for every occasion!



McCALL'S M7350 DRESS. MISSES' SIZES: 6 – 22.

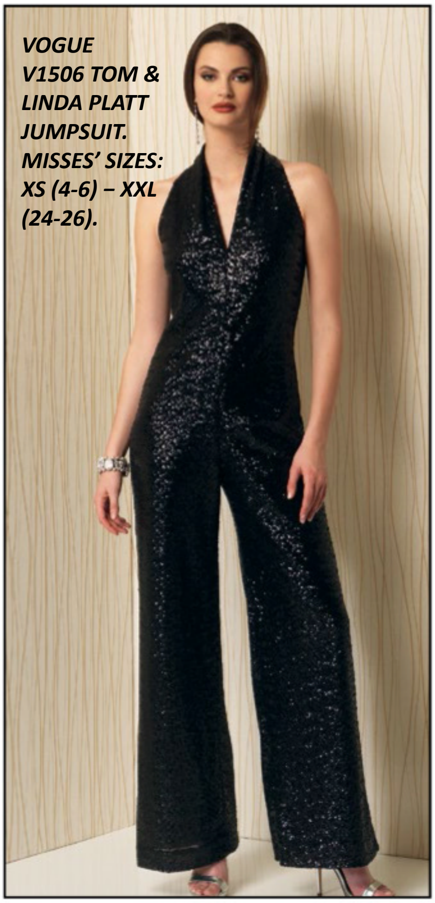
When we traditionally think of eveningwear, we think of 'Big-time' formal occasion dresses that usually roll down a red carpet … but for the real world, what's needed are some reliable looks in your closet that are easy to throw on and that are ready for a wide range of occasions (a theatre/restaurant evening, a special occasion at home, a dinner date, an afternoon-into-evening function), without too much stress, especially when the summer festive season calls for a somewhat less formal approach. Even though the approach is somewhat easier than with a pull-out-all-the-stops evening gown, it's actually one that requires more thinking, as these looks have to be more versatile to cover a range of occasions (let's face it – you're not likely to have a whole wardrobe of full evening looks, but rather, a few reliable 'stand-bys' to see you through all those occasions). Here are some of this coming festive season's best:

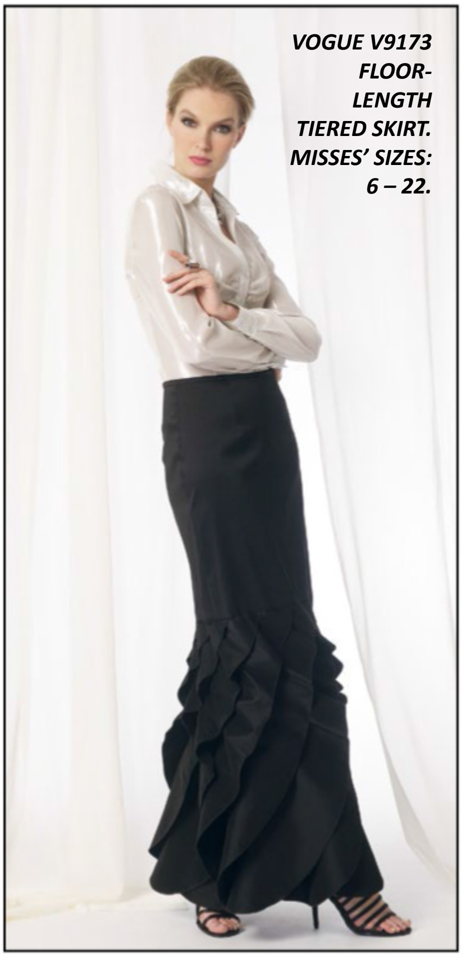
Of course, one of the all-time classic 'stand-bys' is THE LITTLE (OR NOT-SO-LITTLE!) BLACK DRESS. By now, you probably have some sort of classic sheath-shaped version to the knee, and that's fine. But, because we are talking about evening events that will happen in warmer weather, maybe something softer and lighter (and for a change, something even a little longer?) is required. One of the most flattering dresses of that ilk that we've seen for a long time is the McCall's number at left. Its becoming surplice neckline, softly pleated waist and gently flaring, floating wrap skirt suits a wide range of body shapes and ages, and can easily be dressed up (glittering chandelier drop earrings and coloured satin heels), or down (a bold cuff and some metallic sandals) with a clever change of jewellery and accessories. Its inherent versatility with accessorising definitely qualifies it for not only 'stand-by' status, but as a wonderful new classic you will wear for many evenings to come.

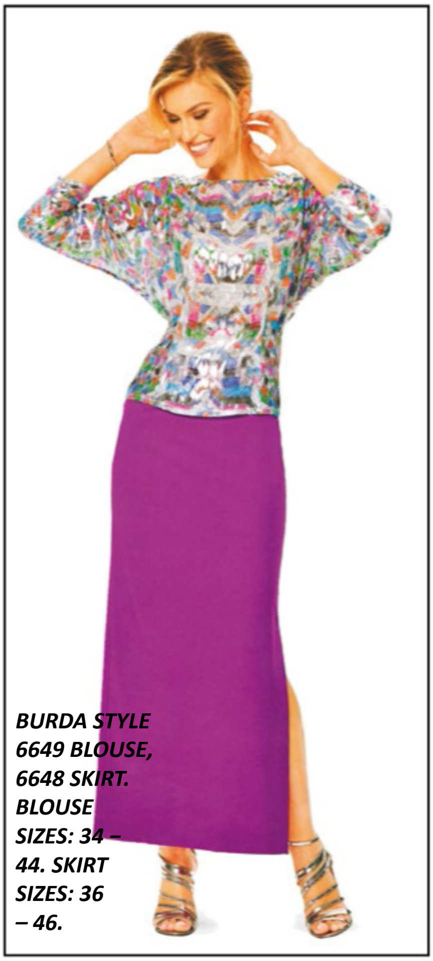
If that particular style doesn't appeal, then take your time finding just the right one for you. Experiment with different fabrics or interesting necklines … sometimes just a little change of detail, such as a lace overlay or a slightly softer skirt can make all the difference.

Another terrific one-piece wonder for evening, and another great base to set up a number of looks, is THE JUMPSUIT. It has proved its longevity, moving from being a mere trend to an indispensable daytime piece in almost any woman's wardrobe. It also offers the same streamlined versatility for night – just pop on a pair of fabulous heels, some statement jewellery, and go! And as the glittery look from Vogue by New York designers Tom and Linda Platt shows, it can be just as glamourous as any gown … but sparkly isn't the only way to dress it up after dark. The same style in a plainer fabric such as crepe or jersey (and it doesn't have to be black, as any darker colour will do) would provide a base for any special, one-of-a-kind item you throw over it, such as a beautifully patterned silk kimono-style jacket or a fabulously embroidered chiffon shawl. Whichever way you go, look for subtly tailored or draped cuts that skim over the body, with some bareness up top to balance a silhouette with softer or wider pant legs.

Another interesting development in modern eveningwear – THE RISE OF SEPARATES. They offer such a fresh take on dressing up, as well as easily multiplying the options, just as they do for you during the day. The most interesting equation now is to pair something simple with something special, such as a fancy bejewelled, sequinned or embroidered top with simple pants or skirt (as shown in the Burda Style look below right), or conversely, a simple fitted shirt or knit jersey top with a grander evening skirt (Vogue and McCall's have some great options this season, as shown by Vogue at left and on pages 46 – 48). On the subject of ornate tops, it definitely pays now to have at least a few varied styles in your wardrobe that can easily move over those daytime pants or skirt, when you don't have much time to get ready – from the simple boat-neck, batwing number from Burda Style at right (a simple shape is better to take all that colour, pattern and shine), to a 'boho-luxe' peasant blouse in embroidered and beaded georgette or silk, a slinky off-the-shoulder jersey tunic or an easier 'pyjama' style in the brightest satin. It doesn't have to be complicated or too 'formal'. Use your stash of special fabric to whip up one – or several! – styles to express your own personality.


VOGUE V1506 TOM & LINDA PLATT JUMPSUIT. MISSES' SIZES: XS (4-6) – XXL (24-26).


VOGUE V9173 FLOOR-LENGTH TIERED SKIRT. MISSES' SIZES: 6 – 22.


BURDA STYLE 6649 BLOUSE, 6648 SKIRT. BLOUSE SIZES: 34 – 44. SKIRT SIZES: 36 – 46.

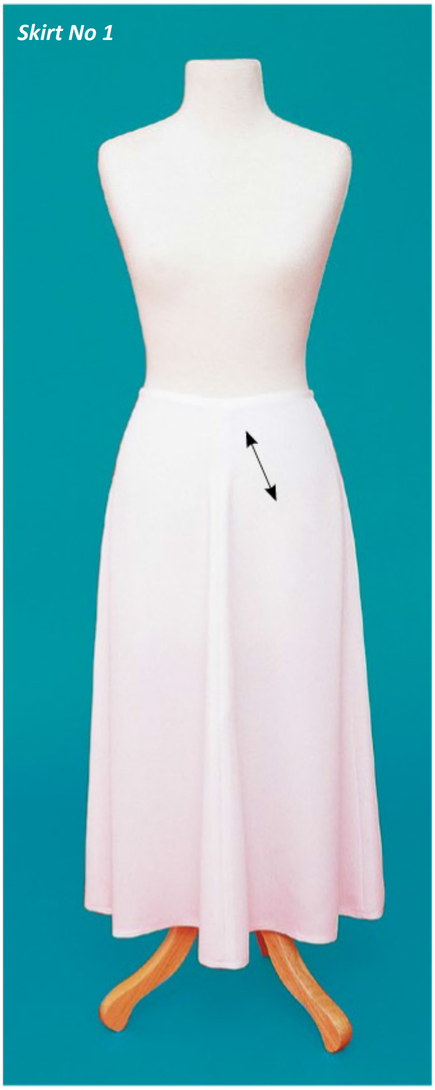
Skirts and Grainlines

We have all been taught to follow the pattern placement instructions when cutting out a pattern.

But what if you don't have quite enough fabric? What if you changed the grainline slightly, would it make much difference? Here we test what would happen to the fall of a skirt if the grainline is changed. Using the same simple four-gore, flared skirt pattern three skirts made – each cut on a different grainline. See the difference for yourself.

Skirt No 1 – The centre of the gore is cut on the straight grain.

Start by placing the vertical



Skirt No 1

Diagram 1a – Skirt 1

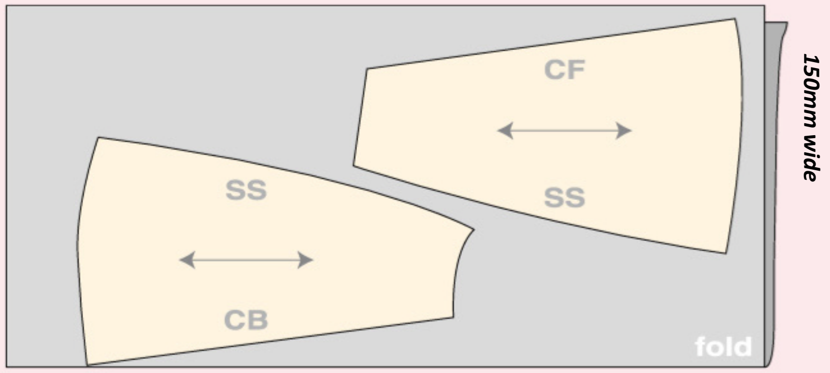
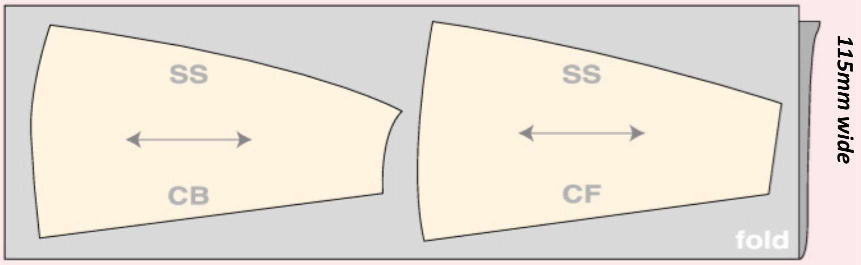


Diagram 1b – Skirt 1



grainline down the centre of the gore. The flare of the gore sits evenly either side of the straight grainline. This gives the skirt an even flounce around the hemline and always looks good no matter what length the skirt is. As the grain is nearly straight on the side seams at the hip level, you also have the option of fitting the skirt more firmly around the hips and keeping the flare just for the hemline, without the skirt distorting out of shape, if more fitting is required. By having the central grainline, your seams will be slightly off-grain and won't pull or pucker. The skirt tends to flounce mainly around the seamlines, depending on the fullness of the design, making the seams less noticeable. Depending on the fabric used, the skirt will drop fairly evenly, which means not a lot of levelling is required when finishing the hem. When it comes to fabric quantity, slightly more is needed. This depends on pattern size and skirt fullness, fabric width, and whether the fabric has a nap or one-way pattern design. You will need one-and-a-half to two skirt lengths for the four-gored skirt. See diagrams la and lb.

Skirt No 2 – The centre-front and centre-back seams are placed on the straight grain.

Depending on the fullness of the pattern, this automatically throws the side seams toward a bias grain. The skirt sits much flatter at the front and back, and tends to hold its fullness at the sides. The finished look resembles a cone skirt and hangs with the hem looking wider from the front. This cut would be most flattering for a narrow or slender hip figure type as it gives the illusion of curve. The hem will need to be adjusted at the sides to make it level, as the seams on the bias grain will always drop more and need to be levelled before hemming. A looser weave or knit fabric will drop considerably more. Wastage is minimal when cutting out your fabric unless there is a nap

Skirt No 2

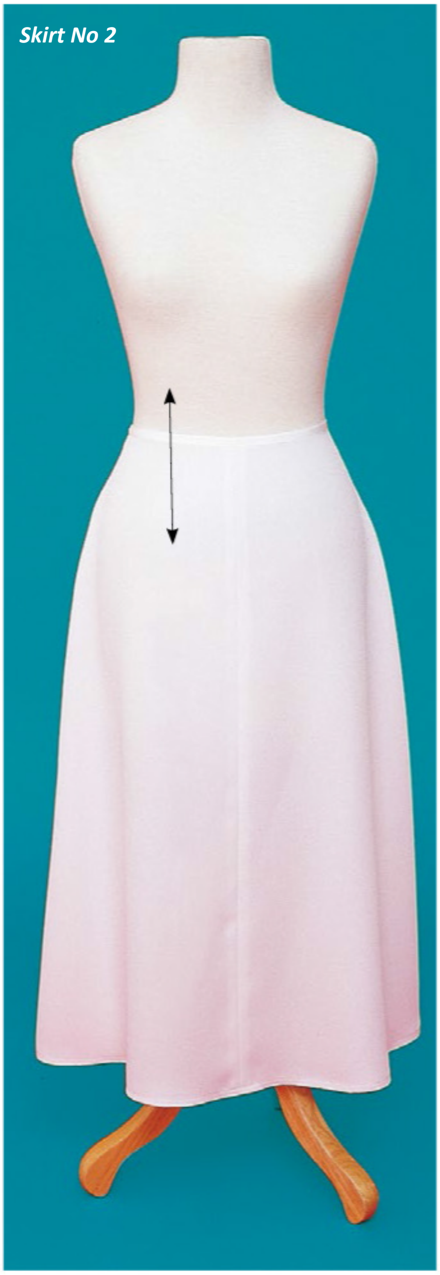
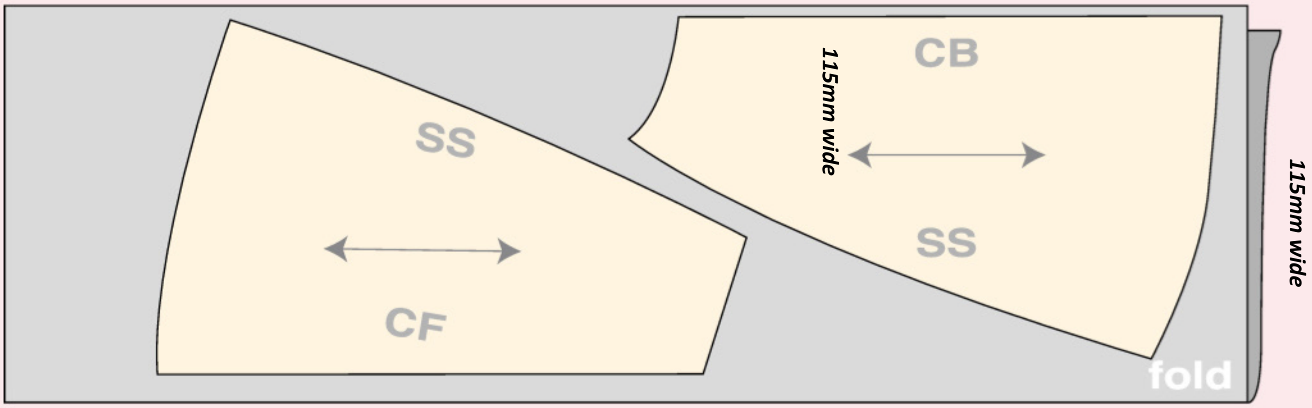
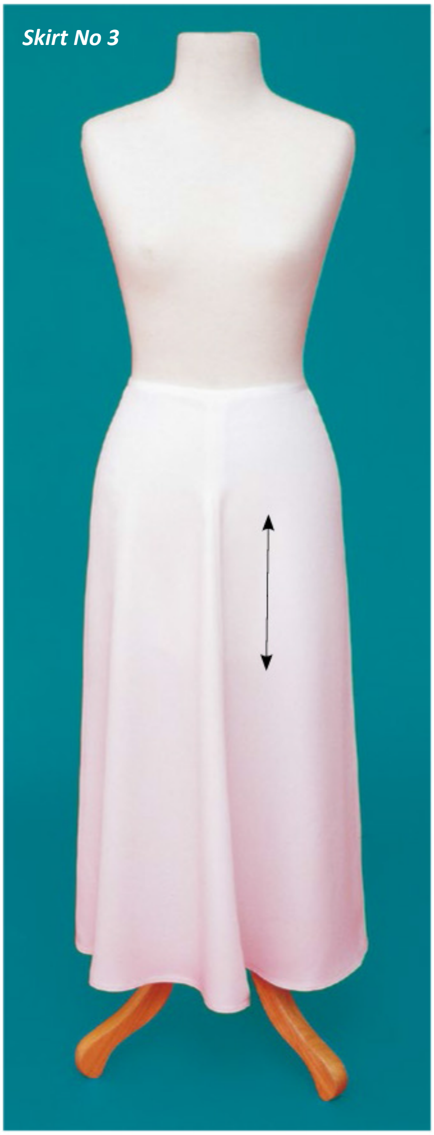


Diagram 2 – Skirt 2



Skirt No 3



or obvious pattern to consider. Depending on pattern size and fullness, and fabric width, one to one-and-a-half skirt lengths of fabric are needed for a four-gore skirt. See diagram 2.

Skirt No 3 – The side seams are placed on the straight grain.

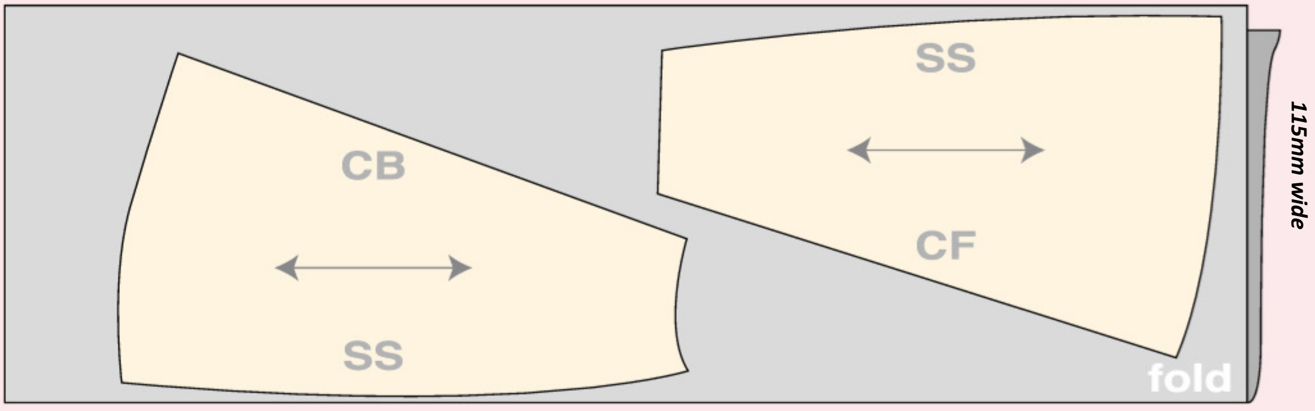
This throws the centre-front and centre-back seams toward a bias grain. The end result is a much fuller front and back skirt with the side seams hanging straight down the leg. This grainline is unsuitable for someone with slender hips. However, this cut would be much better suited to a figure type that is slightly heavier in the hip, as the flatter side seams don't widen the hem or hip area, giving the illusion of a straighter line. As well, the front and back skirt will tend to sit a little flatter if the hip area is filled out, just leaving the hem to softly flounce instead of flaring out. The front and back hem will drop slightly and need to be levelled. Wastage is minimal when cutting out your fabric unless there is a nap or obvious pattern to consider. Depending on pattern size and fullness, and fabric width, one to one-and-a-half skirt lengths of fabric are needed for this four-gored skirt. See diagram 3.

Summary

All skirts worked, but certain factors regarding figure type, style of skirt and fabric will all influence your final decision before cutting. Skirt number one definitely has the thumbs up. However, skirts two and three were more economical on fabric. So don't despair, if you've skimped on fabric there is life for your skirt after all.

Tip: Before cutting your fabric, decide the zipper position on your skirt. If the grain is thrown too far off on the seam, it can make it difficult to insert the zip without it stretching and buckling, unless the opening is first stabilised with a strip of iron-on interfacing.

Diagram 3



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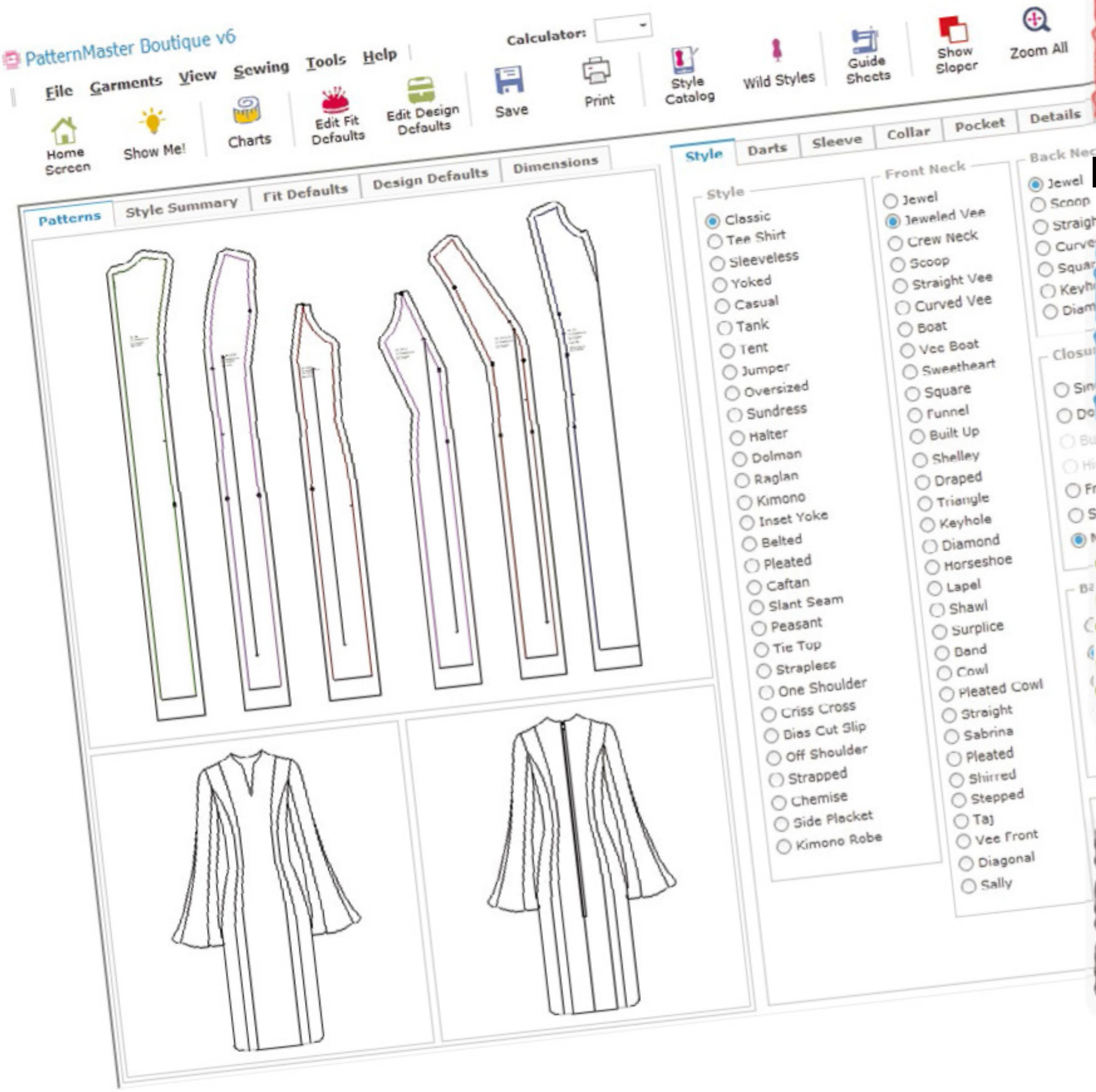
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Show Sloper
Zoom All
Patterns
Style Summary
Fit Defaults
Design Defaults
Dimensions
Style
Darts
Sleeve
Collar
Pocket
Details

Style: ● Classic ○ Tee Shirt ○ Sleeveless ○ Yoked ○ Casual ○ Tank ○ Tent ○ Jumper ○ Oversized ○ Sundress ○ Halter ○ Dolman ○ Raglan ○ Kimono ○ Inset Yoke ○ Belted ○ Pleated ○ Caftan ○ Slant Seam ○ Peasant ○ Tie Top ○ Strapless ○ One Shoulder ○ Criss Cross ○ Bias Cut Slip ○ Off Shoulder ○ Strapped ○ Chemise ○ Side Placket ○ Kimono Robe

Front Neck: ○ Jewel ● Jeweled Vee ○ Crew Neck ○ Scoop ○ Straight Vee ○ Curved Vee ○ Boat ○ Vee Boat ○ Sweetheart ○ Square ○ Funnel ○ Built Up ○ Shelley ○ Draped ○ Triangle ○ Keyhole ○ Diamond ○ Horseshoe ○ Lapel ○ Shawl ○ Surplice ○ Band ○ Cowl ○ Pleated Cowl ○ Straight ○ Sabrina ○ Pleated ○ Shirred ○ Stepped ○ Taj ○ Vee Front ○ Diagonal ○ Sally

Back Neck: ● Jewel ○ Scoop ○ Straight Vee ○ Curved Vee ○ Squar ○ Keyh ○ Diam

Closu: ○ Sin ○ Do ○ Button Placket ○ Hidden Placket ○ Fron ○ Side Zipper ● No Closure

○ Back Overlap

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Make Your Own Shoulder Pads

By Claire Shaeffer

Although these days we don't use shoulder pads as we did in the 1980s, when 'power suits' were all the rage, we are returning to a more tailored and structured look.

If you have never given a thought to making your own pads, now is the time to learn from an expert and be ready when the new styling arrives for winter. First, Claire experiments with readymade shoulder pads in different sizes, thicknesses and shapes to decide which shoulder pad is right for the individual figure and the particular design. This allows her to know, before she begins building the shoulder pad, exactly how she wants to customise them.

Shoulder pads help to create a smooth, well-defined shoulder line, while filling in the hollows above the bust. They are a key component in all types of tailored garments, from inexpensive ready-to-wear outfits to haute couture, and just as important as interfacings and canvas foundations. Shoulder pads can be inconspicuously thin or outrageously thick, depending on current fashion trends – but they cannot be eliminated.

Many people make their own shoulder pads because quality commercial products are not always available, but there are other reasons, too. One important factor is the choice of materials. Most commercial shoulder pads are made of polyester fleece or moulded foam

– two products, which tend to be stiffer and less pliable.

Polyester-fleece pads often have blunt edges and are sometimes difficult to shape permanently so they can be inconspicuously set into the garment. Foam pads often deteriorate before the garment is ready to be discarded, so making your own will overcome this problem.

When making shoulder pads, use cotton batting or wadding. These materials are soft and malleable, making them easy to fashion into a variety of shapes. They can be feathered at the edges to avoid any ridges, which might show on the garment, and they can be moulded so they will maintain their shape for the life of the garment. For those of us with less than perfect figures, they can be fine-tuned to fit asymmetrical shoulders or fill in little hollows.

There are many different ways to make shoulder pads

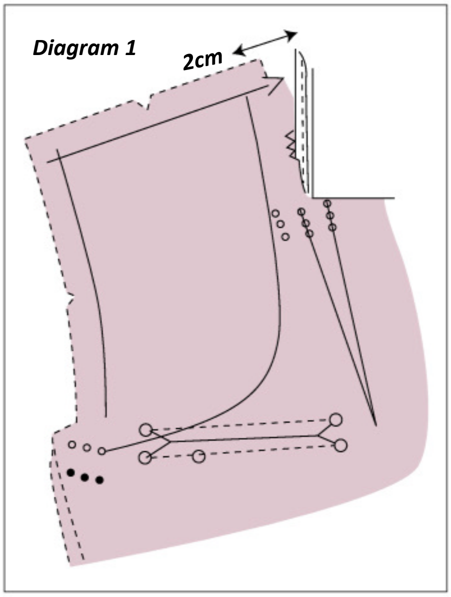
The following directions are based on shoulder pads which were in an Yves Saint Laurent couture jacket. They establish figure-flattering elegance with a contemporary look.

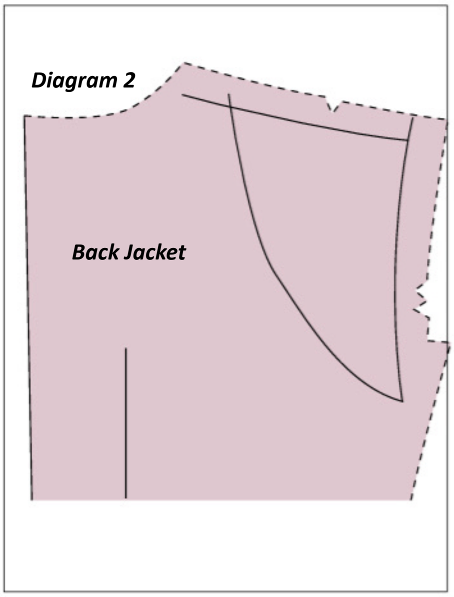
Shoulder pad requirements:

- Jacket pattern of your choice
- Calico to make a toile
- Tracing paper and pencil
- Cotton batting
- Lightweight hair canvas
- Fabric-marking pen or tailor's chalk

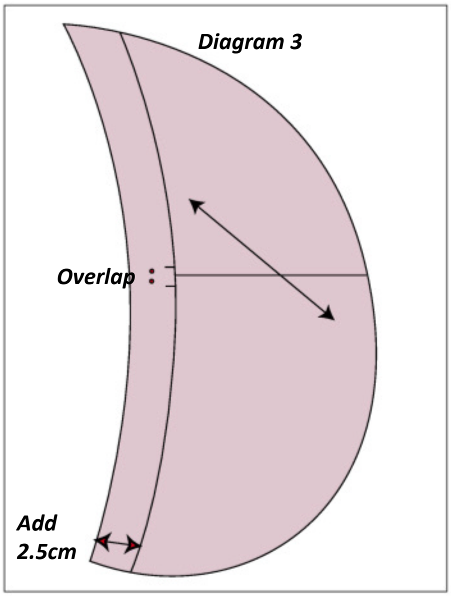
Drawing the pattern

1. Make a calico toile of the garment using your pattern.
2. After you have fitted the toile and marked the corrections on it or the pattern, transfer the shoulder areas of the front and back panels to a piece of tracing paper.





3. For the front shoulder-pad pattern, trace the seamline at the armhole, stopping at the front notch or about 12.5 – 15cm (5 – 6in) below the shoulder point. Trace the seamline at the shoulder, stopping about 2cm (¾in) from the neck. Connect these two lines with a deep curve so the pad will fill in the hollow above the bust and support the fabric in a smooth line. See diagram 1.
4. On the back shoulder-pad pattern, trace the seamline at the armhole, stopping at the back notch or about 15cm (6in) below the shoulder point. Trace the seamline at the shoulder, stopping about 2cm (¾n) from the neck. Connect these two lines with a shallow curve. The back of the shoulder pad is smaller than the front because of the shoulder blade. See diagram 2.
5. Cut out the pattern pieces and tape the shoulder-pad patterns together at the shoulder. If the seamlines are not straight, allow them to overlap at the armhole end. Add a 2.5cm (1in) seam allowance at the armhole. Re-draw the curve near the neck edge, as required, to avoid a sharp angle. See diagram 3.
6. Mark a new grainline on the completed shoulder-pad pattern at a 45-degree angle to the shoulder seam.



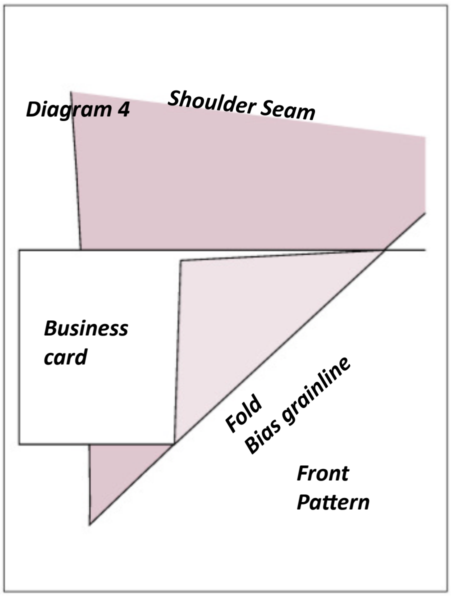


Diagram 5a

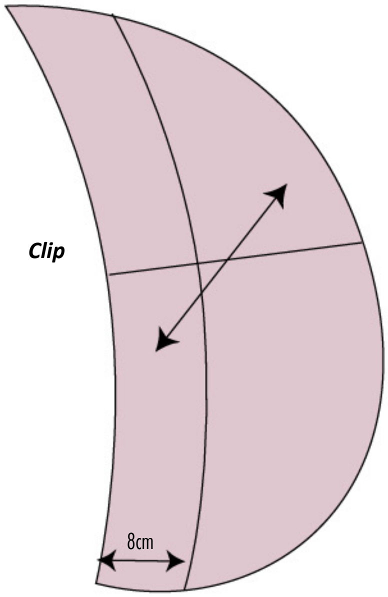


Diagram 5b

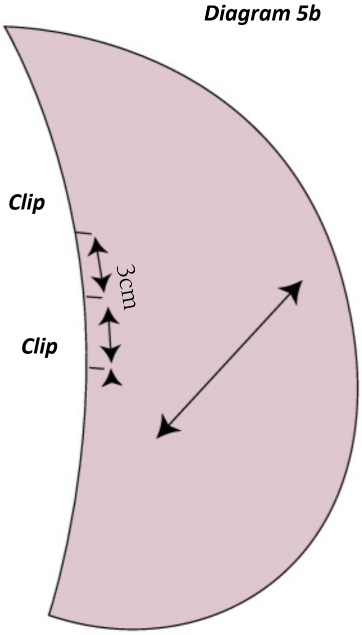


Diagram 6

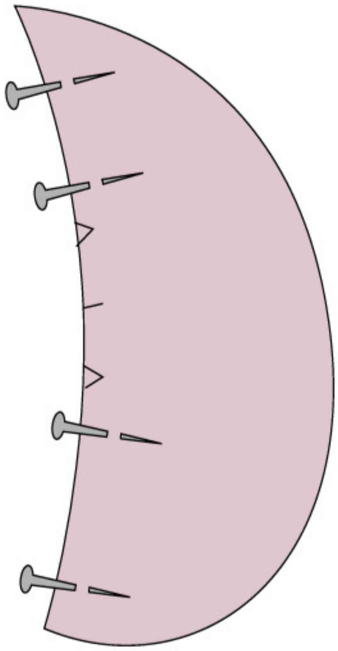
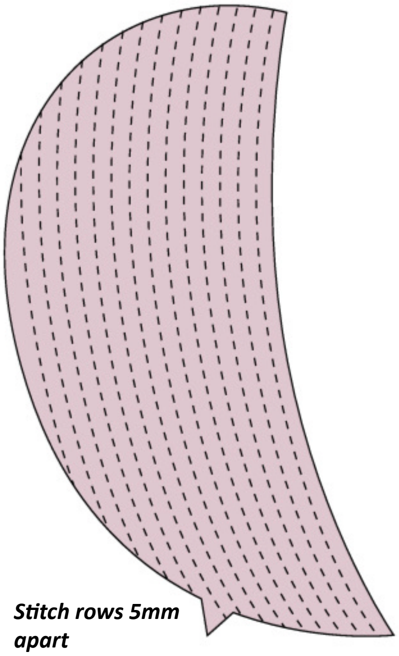


Diagram 7



TIP: Fold a business card so the short end is even with one of the long edges as shown. Align the long edge with the shoulder seamline on the pattern and draw the new grainline along the folded edge as seen in diagram 4.

Cutting out

1. Use the shoulder-pad pattern to cut four sections from lightweight hair canvas. Mark the beginning and the end of the shoulder seams on each of the canvas pieces with 3mm (1/8in) clips.
2. Use the pattern to cut the cotton batting. The number of batting layers will depend on the effect you are trying to achieve, the individual figure and the thickness of the batting. As a rule, 10 to 20 pieces of batting are usually sufficient. Also, it is not necessary to trim the armhole curve at this stage because it will need to be shaped later. Set the batting sections aside.

TIP: The clips made in the first two steps are typical of YSL designs and establish a straighter shoulder line. If you prefer a softer look, do not make the clips.

3. Cotton batting is available in most quilting and better fabric shops and has many advantages:

- It is very pliable and easy to shape.
- The batting can be torn apart easily to create the desired shape; when torn the edges can be pulled and feathered so there are no ridges.
- The batting can be separated into very thin layers.
- Layers can be stacked to achieve the desired thicknesses.
- Layers adhere to each other without slipping and sliding around.

Quilting the hair canvas

1. Separate the hair canvas sections. On one pair, use a fabric marking pen or tailor's chalk to draw a parallel line about 8cm (3¾in) away from the armhole edge to identify the section which will be most thickly padded. See diagram 5a. On the remaining pair, trim all edges, except the armhole by 3mm (1/8in). See diagram 5b.
2. Stack the hair canvas sections, beginning with the marked section. With the unmarked side up, place a trimmed section on top. Match and pin the armhole edges together at the ends and shoulder seams as shown in diagram 6. Before proceeding, check to ensure you are making a pair of the shoulder pads, not two for the same side, so be sure to reverse one set of layers.
3. On the armhole edge, make 3mm

(1/8in) clips, 3cm (1¼in) either side of the shoulder seam.

4. With the shorter section on top, begin quilting the hair canvas about 6mm (¼in) from the armhole edge. Hold up the end toward you in a curved position when quilting. Stretch the edges slightly as you stitch but do not allow any of the clips to open more than 6mm (¼in). Repeat this step to quilt the other shoulder pad.

TIP: Thread the needle with one thread colour and the bobbin in another so you can easily identify the shorter inside layer. This is a good time to empty bobbins filled with colours rarely used.

5. Machine-quilting in parallel rows, alternate between the two sections, spacing the rows about 6mm (¼in) apart. See diagram 7.
6. With the longer layer on top, steam-press the hair canvas over the edge of a tailor's ham, seam roll or small pillow.

Padding the shoulder pads

There is a variety of ways to layer and build the shoulder pads. In many workrooms it is done on a dress form, a tailor's ham or a firm cushion. One worker in Valentino's atelier in Rome shapes them over her knees, while another at Givenchy in Paris simply shapes them in her hands with the wrong side up.

Since many home sewers do not have a dress form, the shoulder pads in this project are layered from the top – hair canvas – to the bottom – batting. This requires constant attention to ensure the last layer added is slightly shorter than the previous one.

1. Place both hair canvas shapes on the table with the shorter side up so you can build both shoulder pads at the same time. If you are going to make one shoulder pad thicker than the other to camouflage a low shoulder, identify it so you will know which one needs the extra layers.
2. For each pad, begin with one or two layers of thin batting cut to the shoulder pad pattern. Feather all edges, except the armhole, so that the batting is slightly smaller than the hair canvas.

TIP: Always tear and feather the edges away from the armhole to avoid any blunt edges that may create lumps. Do not worry if the batting extends beyond the hair canvas at the armhole as it will be trimmed later.

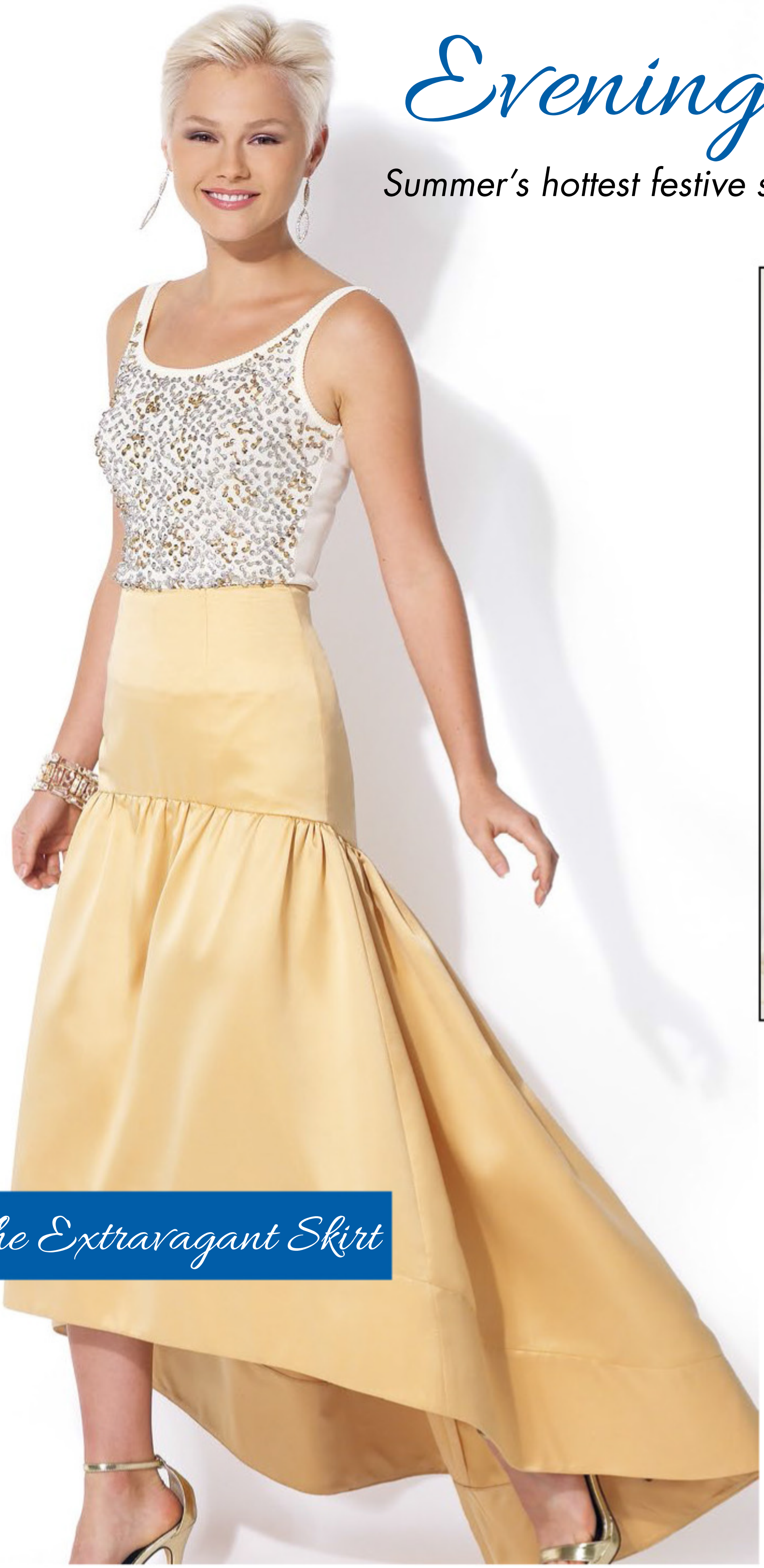
3. Fold the hair canvas at the shoulder with the batting inside. With the canvas folded, straighten any wrinkles in the cotton batting and pat it in place so it is smooth and slightly shorter than the hair canvas.
4. Tear one or two layers of thin batting 4 – 5cm (15/8 – 2in) wide. Place them on the shoulder pads at the armhole.

TIP: Use the left-over pieces of batting you've just torn off to add more layers at the armhole. Since they are quite small, you can overlap the feathered edges without creating ridges.

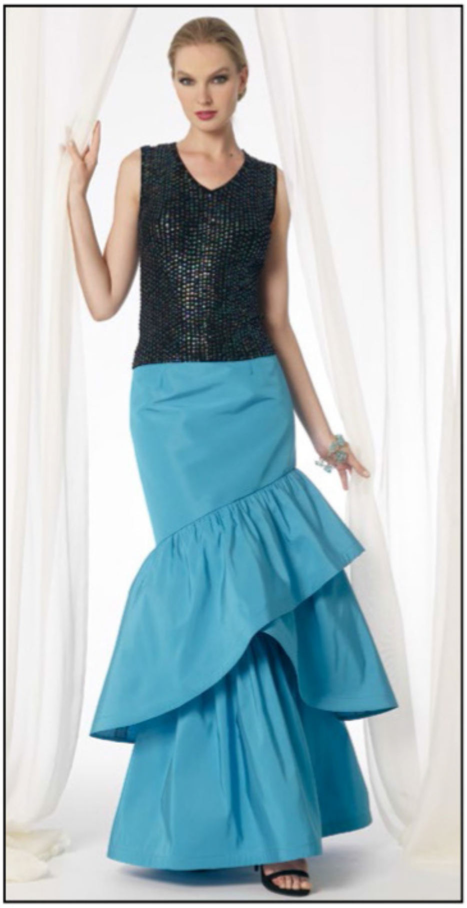
5. Cover the batting and hair canvas with a layer of batting almost as large as the hair canvas and repeat the process to smooth it in place.
6. Repeat step 4, adding more small pieces of cotton batting at the armhole.
7. To fill the hollow above the bust, add some extra pieces of batting at the front of the shoulder pad.
8. Cover the small pieces of batting with a complete piece of batting that is slightly smaller than the piece applied in step 5.
9. Repeat these steps, alternating narrow layers near the armhole with larger pieces until the pad is the desired thickness at the armhole and thinner toward the neckline. Pat the batting with your fingers to determine there are no ridges, and that the layers make a smooth transition from one edge to the other.
10. Hold the shoulder pad over your hand in a curve and sew the batting and hair canvas layers together with large diagonal stitches. Repeat for the other shoulder pad.
11. With the batting side up, press the shoulder pads carefully to avoid flattening the shape you have created. Then pin them over the edge of a tailor's ham and steam-press in place.
12. Use a very large, sharp pair of scissors to trim the armhole seam allowance to 1.5cm (5/8in).
13. If you do not plan to use them immediately, roll each shoulder pad into a cylinder. Store until needed.

Evening Flash!

Summer's hottest festive season looks after dark.



The Extravagant Skirt



As we already mentioned in 'Get The Look', separates for evening are where the current fashion action is. When the occasion calls for something a little more 'dressed', it's worth skirting the issue, as there are now a great selection of floating, flaring wonders in glimmering taffeta, satin or shantung. They are the fresher, more modern alternative to the standard long ballgown, especially

Main image: McCALL'S M7329 GATHERED 'HIGH-LOW' HEM SKIRT.
Above: VOGUE V9173 FLOOR LENGTH TIERED SKIRT.

when paired with a simple (but sometimes sparkly!) tank top or fitted shirt. With interesting details such as asymmetrical ruffles or uneven hems, they really shine in slightly offbeat colours as the mustard/gold or aqua blue shown on the glamourous Vogue and McCall's styles shown on the facing page.

One constant in eveningwear that never really dates is the predilection for Hollywood glamour; the style of those sirens from the early to mid-20th Century such as Jean Harlow, Grace Kelly, Audrey Hepburn and Marilyn Monroe continue to inspire designers today, and the current pattern collections are no exception. The stunning silver-screen worthy look at right from 'Patterns By Gertie' for Butterick is loosely inspired by one of Audrey Hepburn's iconic Givenchy designs from the movie 'Sabrina', but with lighter fabrics and construction (with a detachable overskirt) to zap it into our modern times.

No matter what type of evening look you go for, don't forget those finishing touches that can make all the difference. With all the current emphasis on bare shoulders and necklines, it was inevitable that those fabulously ornate 'shoulder duster' chandelier drop earrings would make a strong comeback as the 'statement' jewellery of the season. The bigger, the bolder, the better ... but keep other jewellery to a minimum. Nothing more than the addition of a bracelet or jewelled cuff is needed (as shown on the photos on these two pages) which is the other hot jewellery item this season. When you are really pushed for time, sometimes it's just a matter of adding such bold jewellery statements to your basic black and you're ready to go in minutes!

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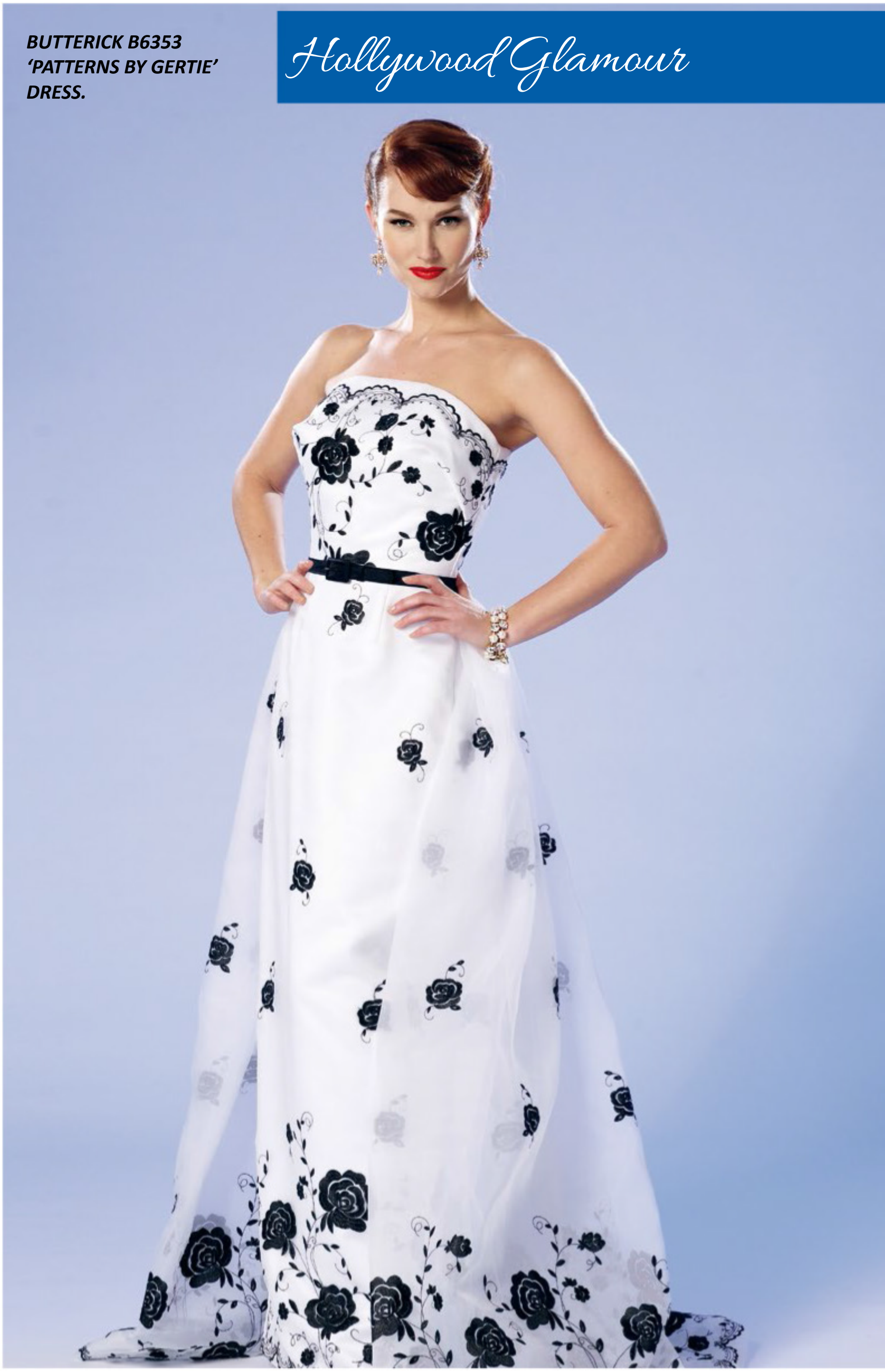
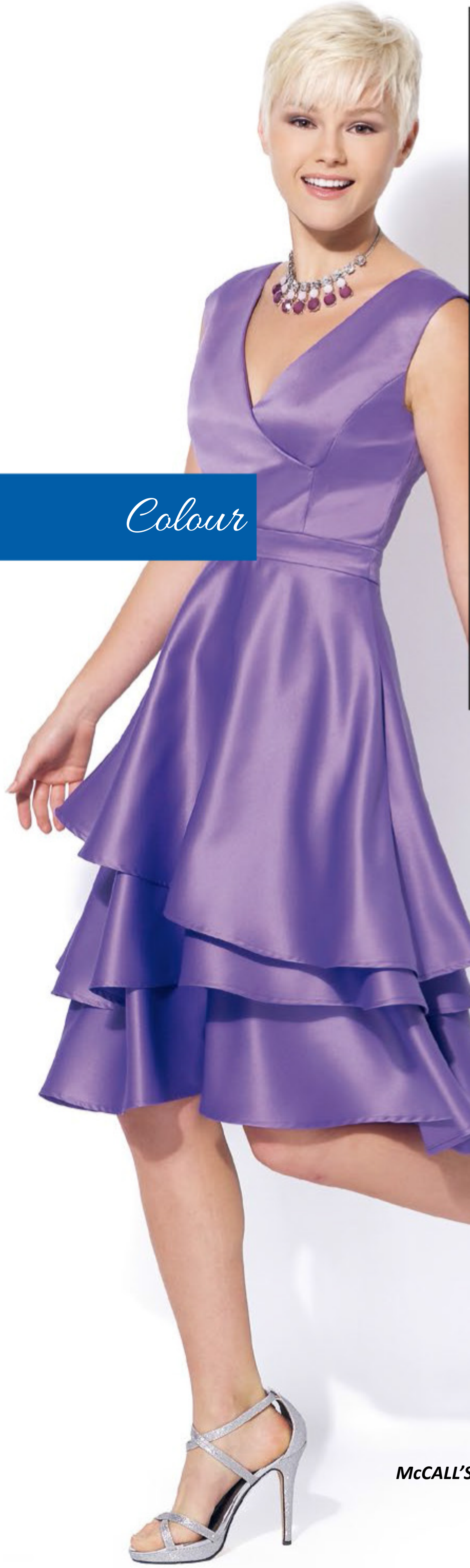
Fancy Drops

Hollywood Glamour

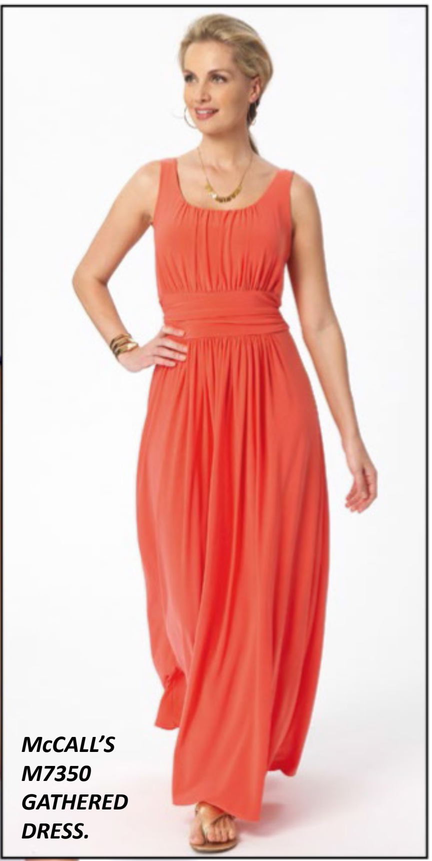


BUTTERICK B6353 'PATTERNS BY GERTIE' DRESS.

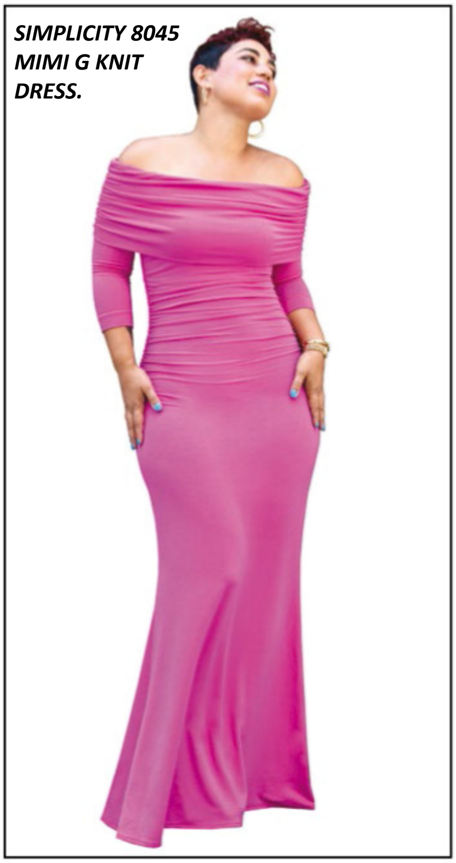
Colour



McCALL'S M7316 ASYMMETRICAL TIERED DRESS.



McCALL'S M7350 GATHERED DRESS.



SIMPLICITY 8045 MIMI G KNIT DRESS.

We all know about the power, the versatility, the ultimate reliability of black … but there's something refreshing and uplifting about wearing colour for a summer evening. Notice that we didn't say 'bright' (even though it could be as bright as that hot fuchsia jersey number by Simplicity in the bottom inset), because 'colour' comes in many shades … from the gleaming – but not blinding – amethyst tone of the fun party frock by McCall's at left, to the juicy – but not so tangy! – citrus shaded jersey number, also by McCall's in the upper-right inset.

When dealing with colours like these, little else is needed … just a metallic sandal and a hint of glint that's either dangling from your earlobes, filling in a low, bare neckline, or sparkling from your wrist. There's no nicer combination to show off that healthy Summer glow at all those festive season parties!

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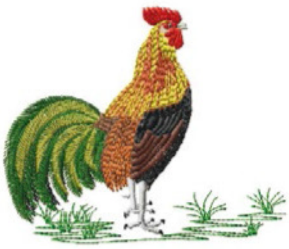

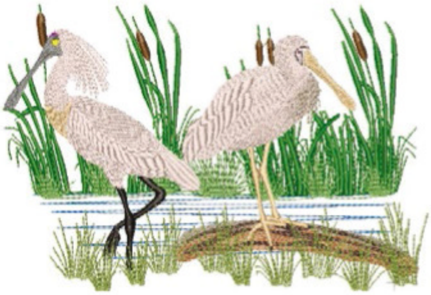

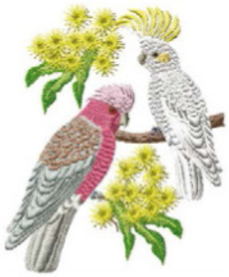

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Now You See It – Now You Don't!

By Lynn Cook

If you are like so many folk who have no dedicated sewing room, then chances are this story is for you!

1

When Lynn decided to reclaim her dressing room, cum sewing space, back into a guest bedroom, she had to think how to solve the problem of where to put everything, make it functional as a useable guest room without compromising too much on the sewing space she uses on a regular basis.

When I worked full-time on Stitches, I had a sewing space in my main office and there was plenty of room for both sewing and editorial. But, I gave that up to my husband who decided to work from home and as I wasn't sewing very much I knew I could use the dining table for the odd sewing times. After all, I was going to travel and sewing was taking a back seat. So I chose my priorities wisely and decided I wanted a bigger dressing room.

I guess I am lucky that I have four bedrooms to do mostly what I like with, and in the recent past I chose to turn one of the smaller bedrooms into a dressing room. After a while I really didn't like the look of it as it sat beside another bedroom and when you walked through the small sitting room that lead to the bedrooms they look all wrong sitting beside each other. Keeping the door closed was not the best option as the two bedrooms looked out onto the street and it was a very pleasing view from the sitting room. This was part of what I call the guest wing and I wanted it to remain inviting when visitors arrived. So the room returned to a bedroom. See photo 1.

With this decision I decided to convert my larger guest bedroom into a combined dressing room and sewing room. Along one wall I placed three white melamine cupboards to take all the sewing equipment. These had been used as storage in the garage. I had a cutting table set up in the middle of the room and the sewing machines were placed on two old office desks under the window. Along the third wall I placed smaller melamine cupboards for storage for hanging clothes and added two white bookshelves for shoes and a white chest of drawers for folded clothing – these came originally out of my walk-in. The fourth wall housed an existing built-in four-door double wardrobe for all the rest of my clothing. And it worked. See diagram 1.

It also gave our dressing room a lot more space and I was able to give over the entire space to my husband so he could have everything in one place and not spread over the house in different wardrobes. How magnanimous of me I thought – first the office now the walk-in. Hmmm.

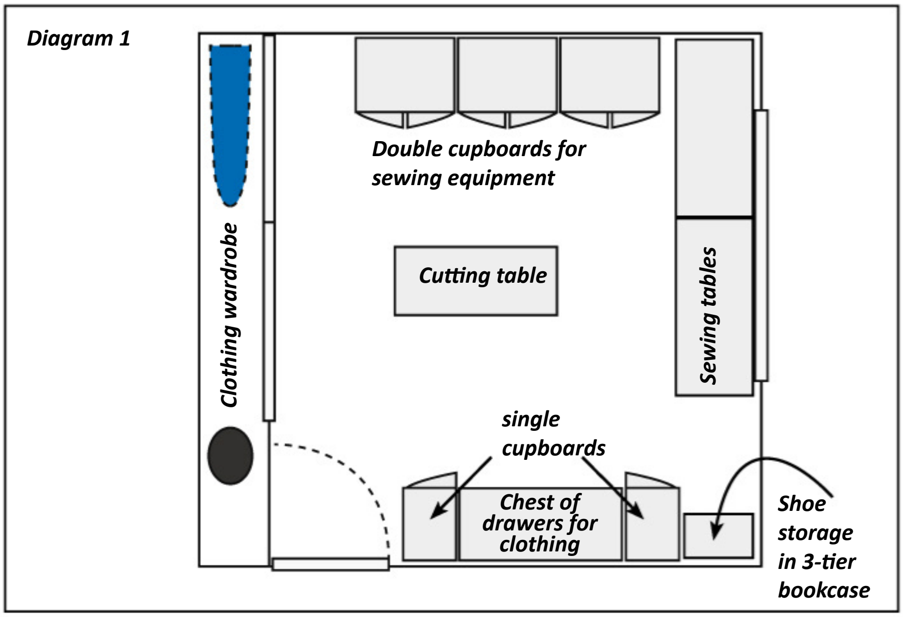
As a Gemini I get to change my mind legally and I decided that I liked the look of the main guest room being just that – a nice big room for my guests (besides I had run out of rooms to decorate) so I called in the 'troupe' (read: husband) and had him move all the furniture; some went back into the original dressing room and the three larger melamine sewing cupboards moved to where I had placed the extra wardrobe cupboards in the beginning. I placed the folding cutting table under the window and the old office desks went to Vinnies. I bought a new Queen bed and redecorated the room. I found time to do a painting to place above the bed and I will dress a mannequin in a colour-matching fabric so she wouldn't scare the guest and I had what I wanted – sort of. See photo 2 and diagram 2.

The first thing was to sort out all the fabrics and haberdashery I had collected over the years so I did a big cull and was ruthless with what I could keep. It was easy when I knew where I could give my precious fabrics a new home. Think schools, women's refuges, and other likeminded sewing friends. I still have plenty of fabrics so I won't go without a fabric fix when I need one.

Now I could go about placing the sewing machines. This was a perfect solution to my situation when using an existing bedroom.

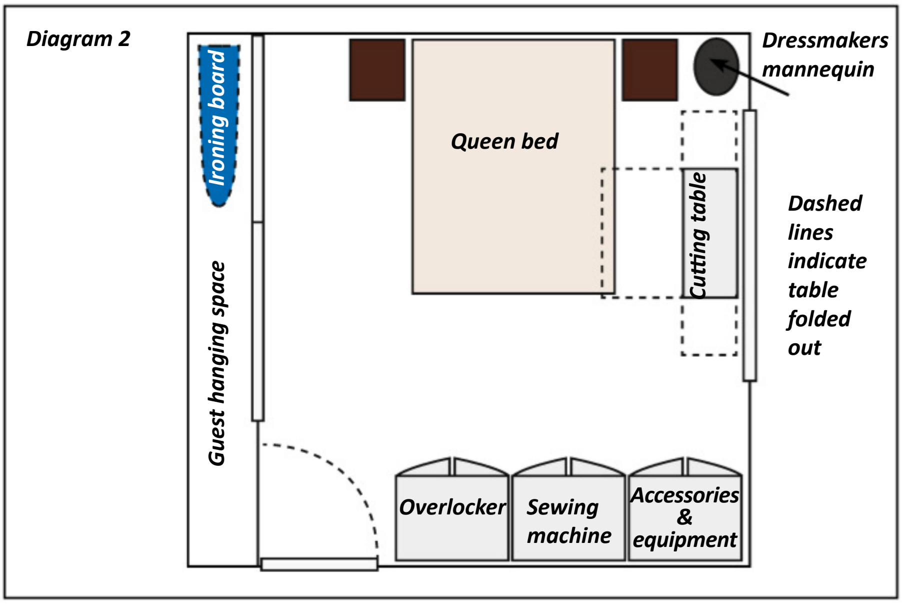
I had several shelves in each cupboard and decided to retain

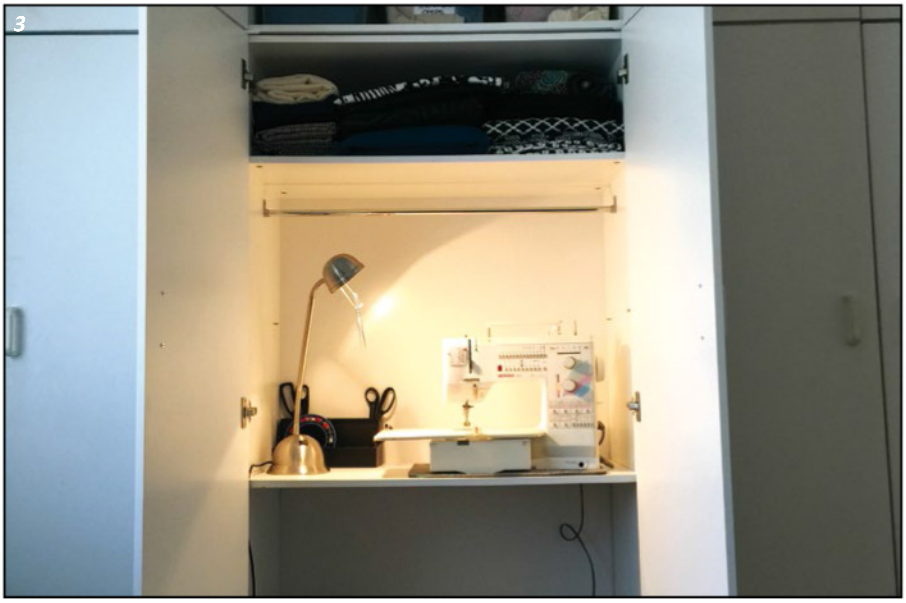
Diagram 1


Clothing wardrobe
Double cupboards for sewing equipment
Cutting table
Sewing tables
single cupboards
Chest of drawers for clothing
Shoe storage in 3-tier bookcase

2

Diagram 2


Ironing board
Guest hanging space
Queen bed
Dressmakers mannequin
Cutting table
Dashed lines indicate table folded out
Overlocker
Sewing machine
Accessories & equipment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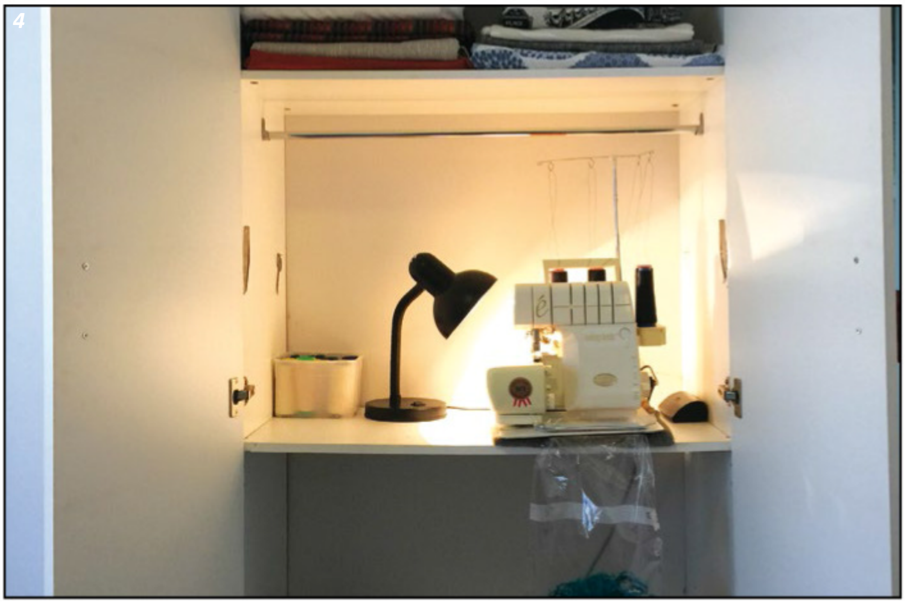
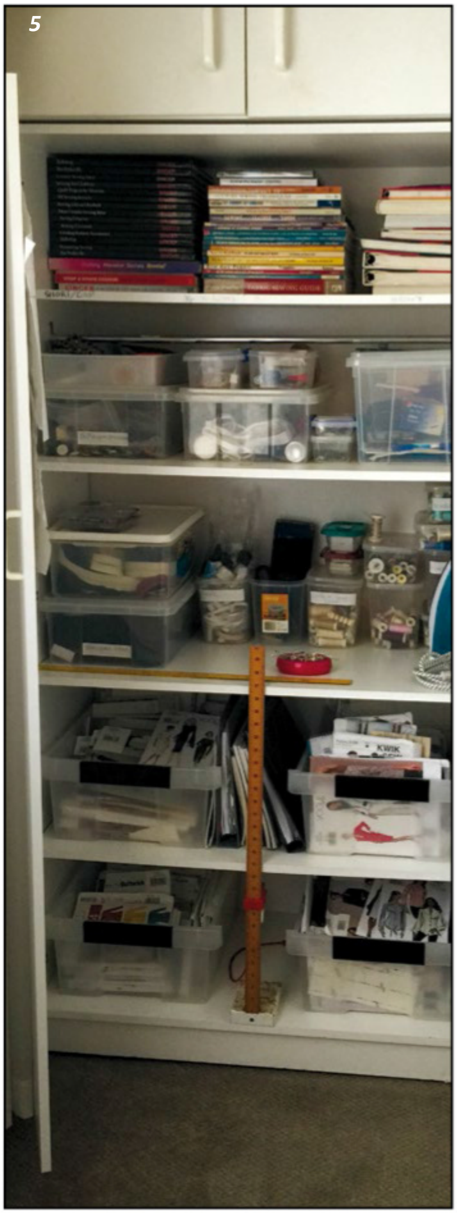

4


5

the top and middle shelves only and remove the second and lower shelves. This gave me a platform for the sewing machine in one cupboard and the overlocker in the other. I had holes drilled in the cupboard backs for the machine leads to go through and I rigged up lighting for better visibility than what the machine lighting offered. See photos 3 and 4. The third cupboard houses most of my haberdashery, threads, patterns and sewing books. See photo 5, The upper cupboards are given over to all my smaller lengths of fabric.

Note to quilters: This is not an ideal sewing setup for you as you will be working with bulk if machine quilting and need more space than required when dressmaking.

It was now time to work out the ironing space. In the double wardrobe I had plenty of space for guests clothing at one end and at the other I had enough room for my professional ironing board and boiler iron. See photo 6.

As for the cutting table, it is also working well. When I am working with small pieces of fabric I just lift one side of the table and although it protrudes over the bed slightly it is not an issue. See photo 7. If cutting out then I swivel the table so it runs under the window and I can lift both sides allowing loads of light and easy manoeuvrability.

This might not be everyone's cup of tea but it is working for me. On the odd occasion I have to work with larger fabric pieces such as drapes, I use the dining table to cut out and I can still sew hems, tops and sides in the space provided within the cupboards. I have also made a quilt cover, but within the confined space it was not the easiest thing to do. My advice is take out the machine

I only use this iron when I am sewing, as it takes a while to heat up. For normal ironing I use an ordinary iron. This ironing board has a foot pedal and when activated it sucks air through the board holding the fabric or clothing in place. If you are working with silk or satin, this is a godsend, as the fabric will not move. The steam also passes through the board drying the fabric faster than normal.

6

When I am working with small pieces of fabric I just lift one side of the table and although it protrudes over the bed slightly it is not an issue.

7

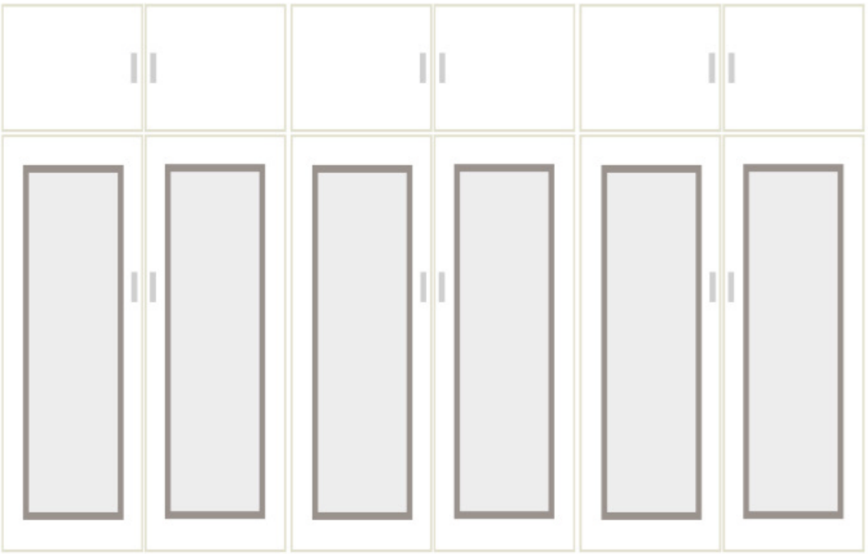
and go and sew on the cutting or dining table. It's only a temporary move and one easily put back.

So there you have it. My bedroom has returned and behind closed doors no one knows what's lurking, and if they do 'sew what'! I like that I can keep the door open and it still looks like a bedroom.

Foot note: I plan to add mirrors to all six doors of the cupboards. I will add a wooden trim around each mirror and paint it the colour of the carpet, which is a neutral taupe/grey. See diagram 3

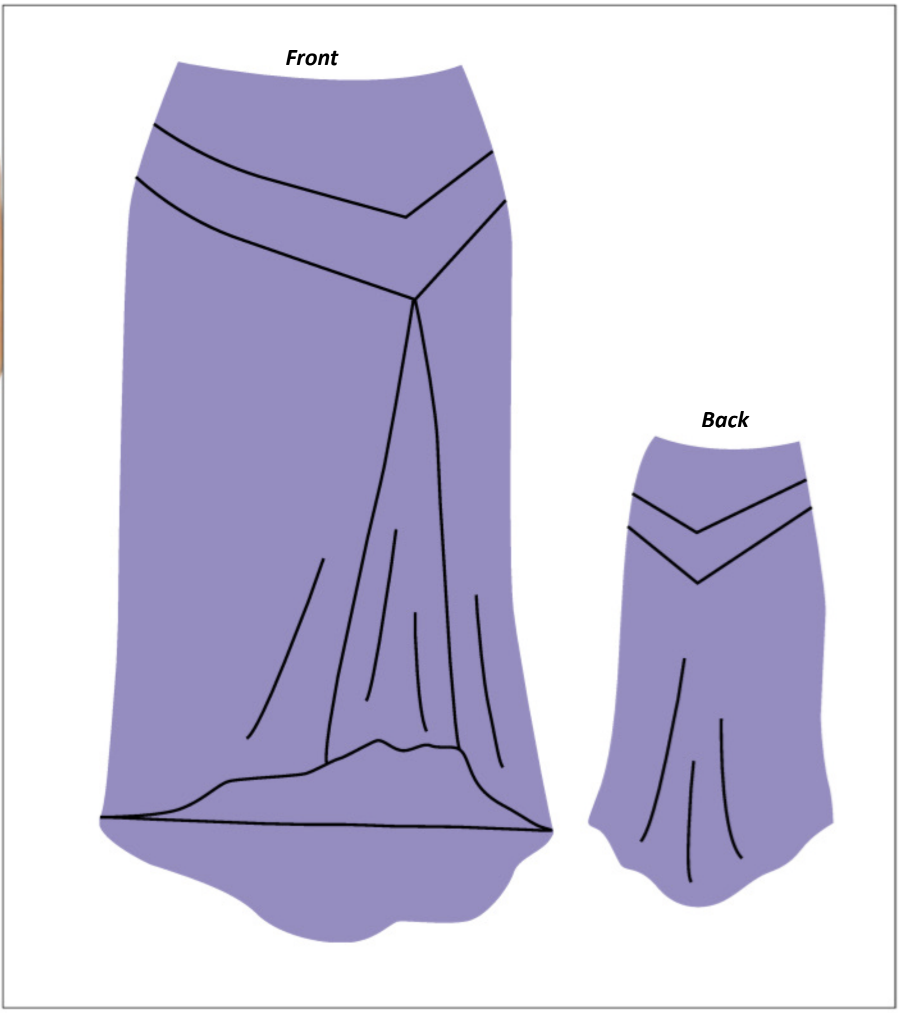
Happy sewing,
Lynn

Diagram 3



Design Your Own Skirt

This complex asymmetrically designed skirt has an inset yoke, plus a godet introduced into the lower skirt for added flare.



Materials

- Pattern Tracing Paper
- Pen Or Pencil
- Ruler
- French Curve
- Basic Skirt Pattern – Fitted To Your Personal Body Shape
- Sticky Tape

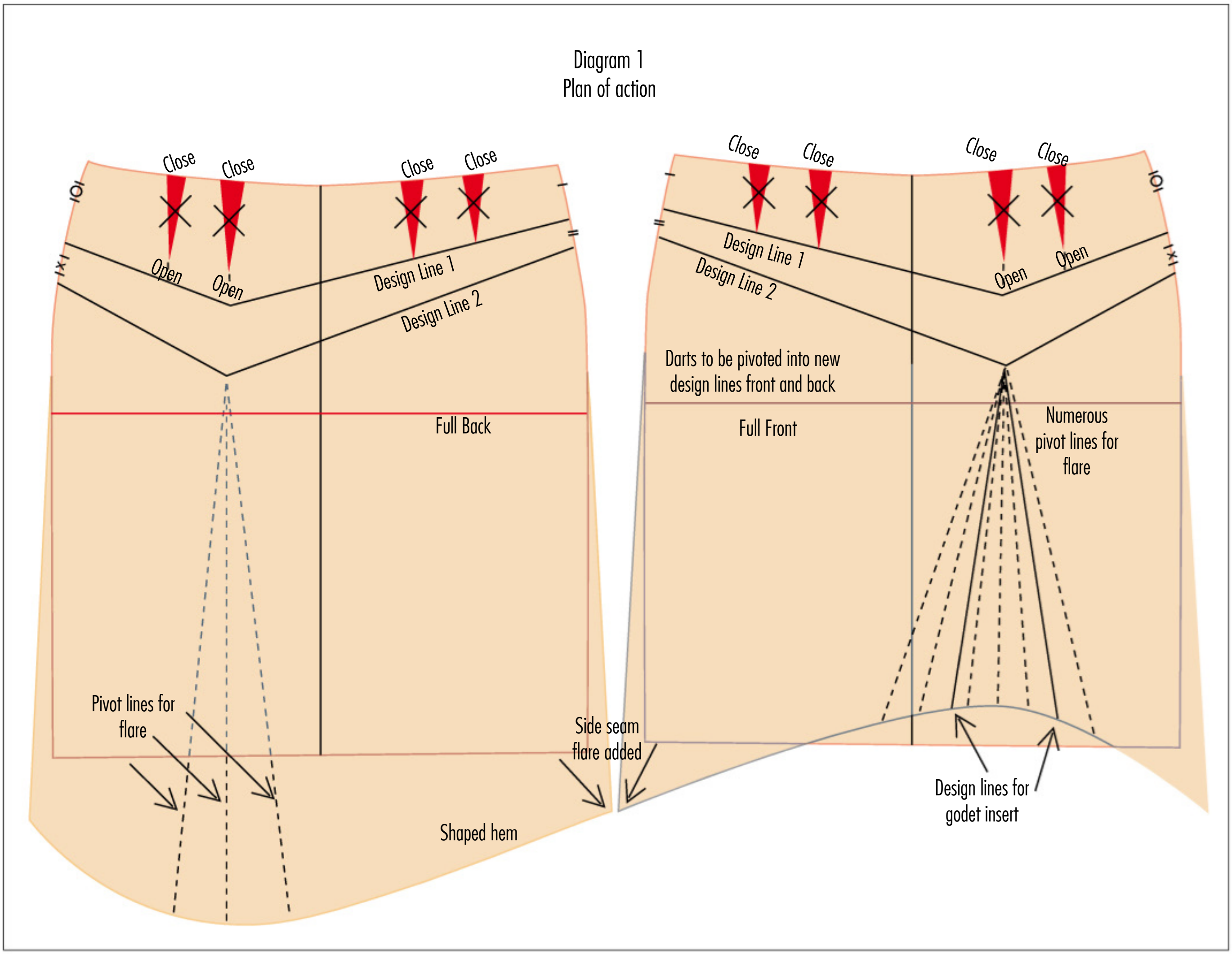


Diagram 1
Plan of action
Close
Close
Close
Close
Open
Open
Design Line 1
Design Line 2
Full Back
Pivot lines for flare
Side seam flare added
Shaped hem
Close
Close
Close
Close
Design Line 1
Design Line 2
Open
Open
Darts to be pivoted into new design lines front and back
Full Front
Numerous pivot lines for flare
Design lines for godet insert

TIPS:

- The style of this design requires a fabric with soft, draping qualities.
- When making a pattern it is important to add a seam allowance to any section that you separate from the original pattern.

You will need to work with a full front and full back pattern. Using diagram 1 as a reference, follow the instructions for the front and back pattern plan.

Front and back skirt plan

Trace the full front and back patterns of your basic skirt block onto paper. As a guide, mark the hipline and grainline.

Note: The centre front and back becomes the grain line.

As the darts are to be pivoted out into the new design line, mark design line 1 as close as possible to the dart points.

Use a tape measure against the body to determine the depth from the waistline to the placement of Design line 2. Mark the positions where the flare is to be introduced.

To introduce side seam flare, add 5cm (2in) flare as shown. However, as much as 10cm (4in) can be added without distorting the pattern shape.

Make sure all added design lines match at the side seams.

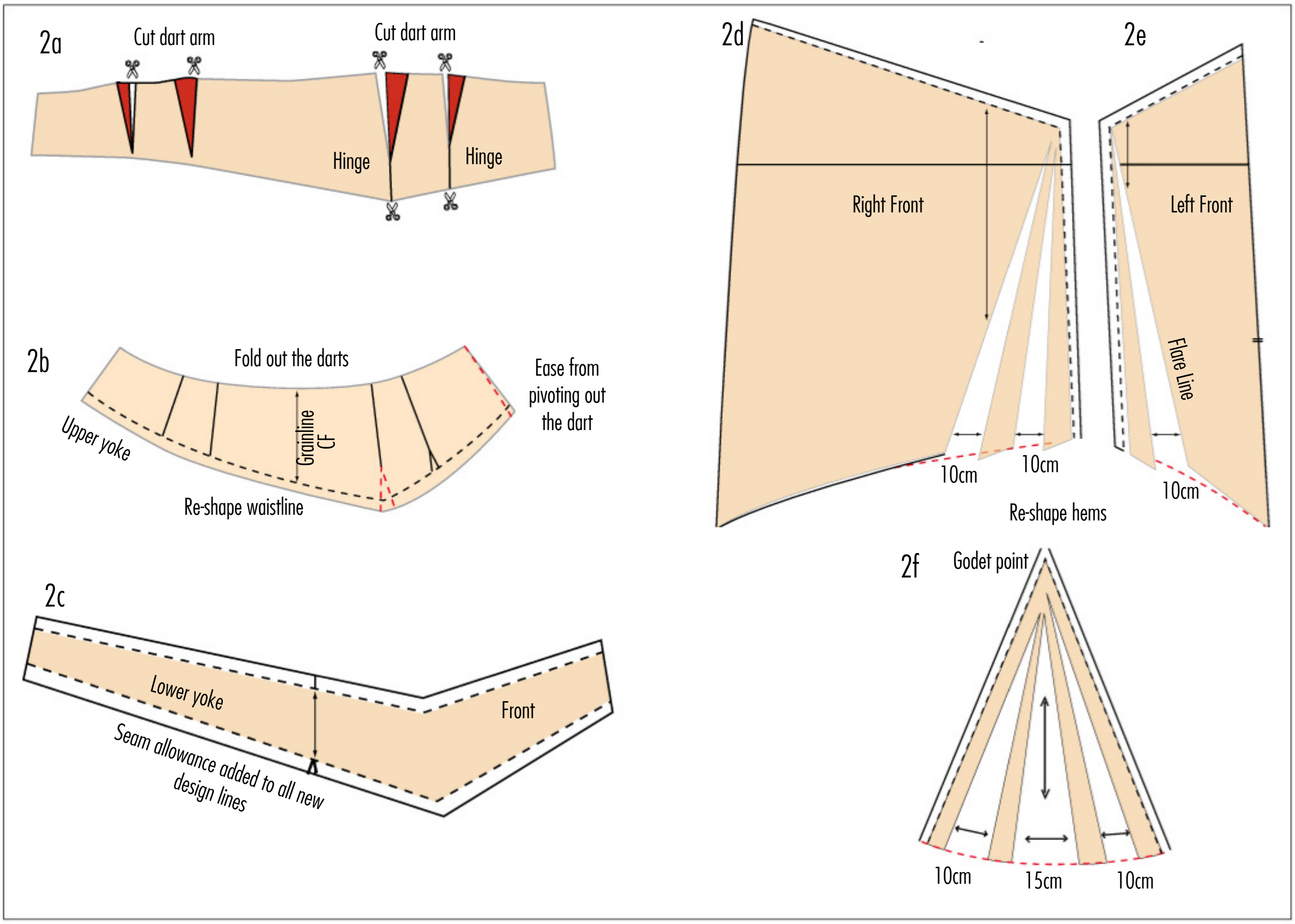
The shaped hem is also a personal preference. Shape the new curved hemline using a French curve. Alternatively, a straight hemline would work just as well.

Pattern working pieces (interim pattern)

Cut out the front and back working pattern pieces. Cut along all the new design lines. Place all the back working pattern pieces to one side.

Front skirt pattern

Starting with the upper front yoke working piece, cut along one arm of all the darts to the dart point. Where the darts sit slightly further away from the design line, cut


2a
Cut dart arm
Cut dart arm
Hinge
Hinge
2b
Fold out the darts
Ease from pivoting out the dart
Upper yoke
Grainline
CF
Re-shape waistline
2c
Lower yoke
Front
Seam allowance added to all new design lines
2d
2e
Right Front
Left Front
Flare Line
10cm
10cm
10cm
Re-shape hems
2f
Godet point
10cm
15cm
10cm

from the design line toward the point of the dart, leaving a hinge for pivoting. See diagram 2a.

Fold out all darts and tape them in position on the paper. Some ease may occur where the darts did not quite extend to the design line. This amount will be minimal and is taken out at the side seam to compensate for it.

Add a seam allowance to the new yoke design line. Mark the grainline and the centre front position. See diagram 2b.

Pin or tape the lower front yoke working piece onto paper. Add a seam allowance to the top and bottom of the new yoke design lines. Mark the grainline and centre front position. These marks will be the notches for joining the skirt together. See diagram 2c.

On the right front skirt working piece, cut along the flare lines from the hem to the hip design line, leaving a small hinge for pivoting. Pin or paste the larger area of the working piece to the paper. Spread the flare lines evenly by 10cm (4in). Re-shape the hem and add a seam allowance to the pattern as shown.

Mark the grainline and centre front for the construction notch. See diagram 2d.

On the left front skirt working piece, cut from the hem along the flare line to the design line, leaving a small hinge. Pin or paste the larger area of the working piece onto paper.

Spread it to insert the desired amount of flare and secure in place. Re-shape the hem and add a seam allowance to all new design lines. Mark the grainline. See diagram 2e.

On the godet working piece, cut along the flare lines to the godet point.

To introduce flare, spread the godet evenly each side of the vertical, centred grainline, ie. 10cm, 15cm, 10cm (4in, 6in, 4in). See diagram 2f.

Re-shape the hem and add seam allowances to each side of the godet.

Back skirt pattern

Note: As the principle for pivoting out the darts is the same for the front and back, use diagram 2a and 2b as a reference for 3a and 3b.

Pivot out the darts on the back yoke section and make the pattern for the lower yoke as for the front skirt. Add the seam allowances as for the front pattern.

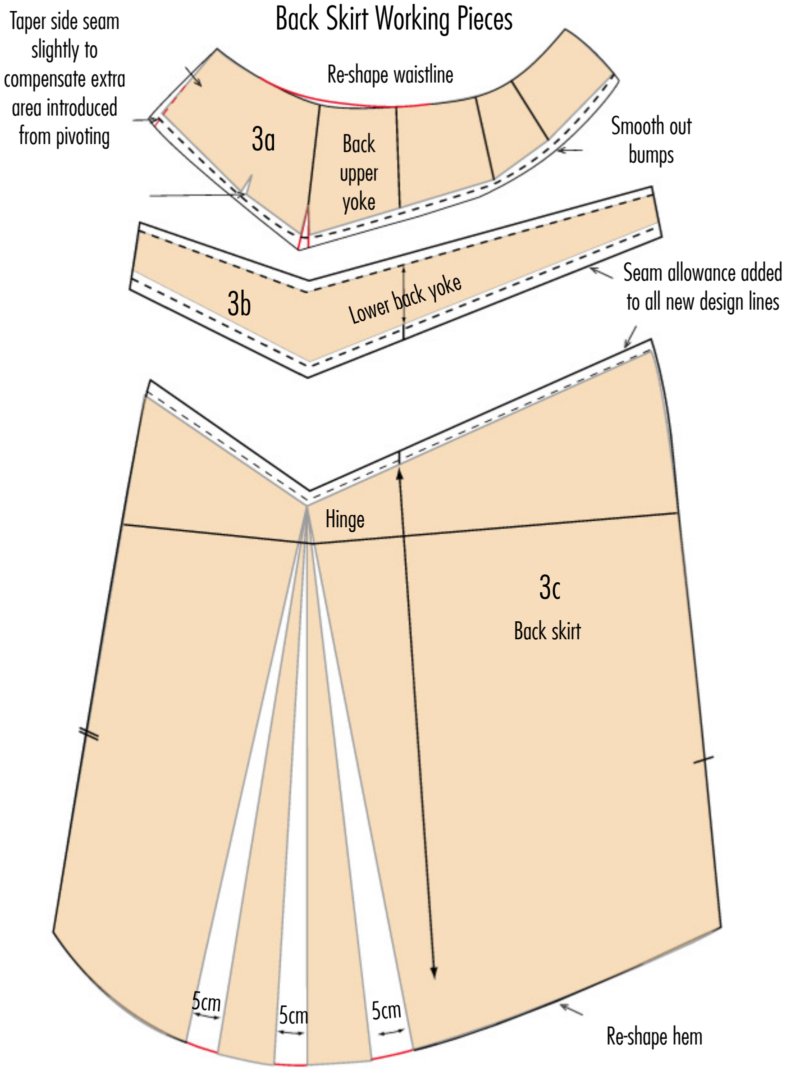
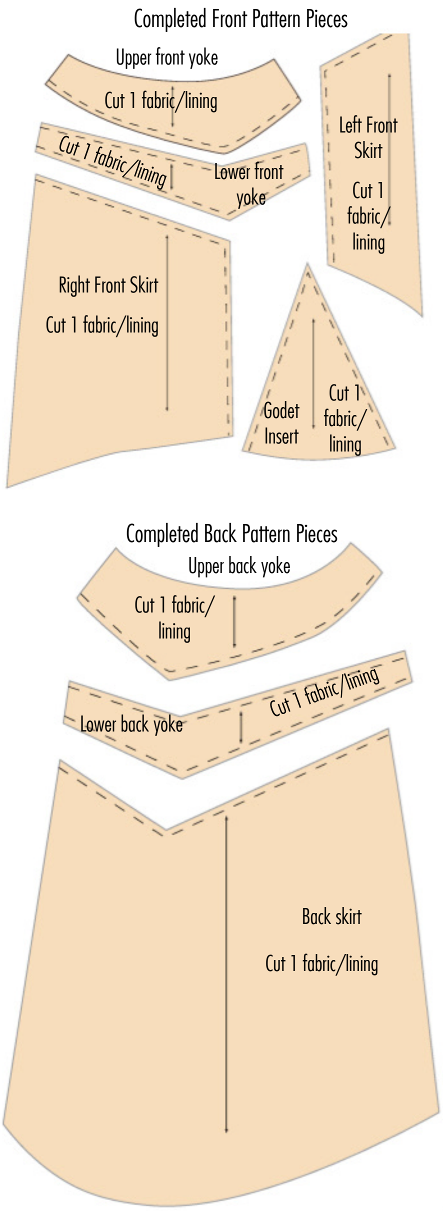

Back Skirt Working Pieces
Taper side seam slightly to compensate extra area introduced from pivoting
Re-shape waistline
3a
Back upper yoke
Smooth out bumps
3b
Lower back yoke
Seam allowance added to all new design lines
Hinge
3c
Back skirt
5cm
5cm
5cm
Re-shape hem

Diagram 4


Completed Front Pattern Pieces
Upper front yoke
Cut 1 fabric/lining
Cut 1 fabric/lining
Lower front yoke
Left Front Skirt
Cut 1 fabric/lining
Right Front Skirt
Cut 1 fabric/lining
Godet Insert
Cut 1 fabric/lining
Completed Back Pattern Pieces
Upper back yoke
Cut 1 fabric/lining
Lower back yoke
Cut 1 fabric/lining
Back skirt
Cut 1 fabric/lining

On the back skirt working piece, cut along the flare line from the hem to the design line, leaving a hinge for pivoting.

Mark a horizontal guideline onto the paper. Spread the back skirt working piece by 5cm (2in) between each flare line. Match the hipline of the working piece at the side seams to the horizontal guideline. Pin or paste in place.

Re-shape the hem and add the seam allowance to the design line. Mark the grainline perpendicular to the horizontal guideline. Mark the centre back position. See diagram 3c.

The full pattern is now complete. See diagram 4.

Layout

The following diagrams are a guide to pattern layout on the fabric for cutting the skirt. Both layouts are calculated for a size 12 pattern. See diagrams 5 and 6.

Sewing instructions

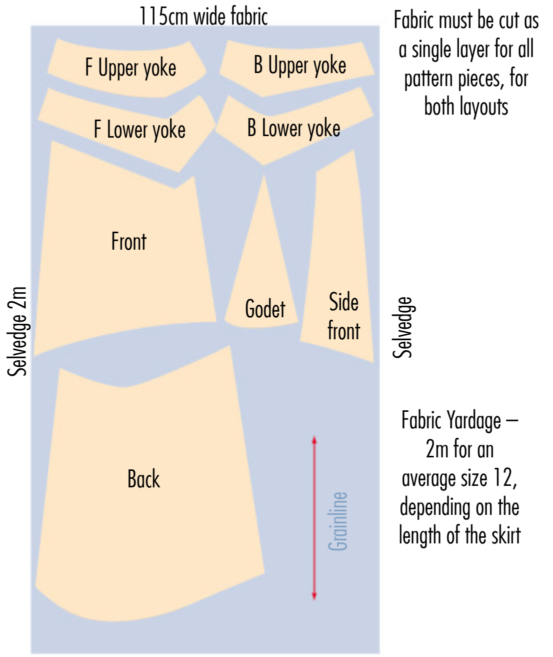
Cut out all pattern pieces in both lining and fabric.

Stay-stitch along the waistline of the front and back upper yokes. With the right sides together, match the centre front notches of the lower yoke to the upper yoke and pin.

Machine-stitch the seam, clipping and pivoting at the point while also taking care not to stretch the 'off grain' seam edge. Repeat for the back skirt. Overlock and press the seam.

With right sides together join the right front skirt to one edge of the godet and then join the left front skirt to the remaining edge.

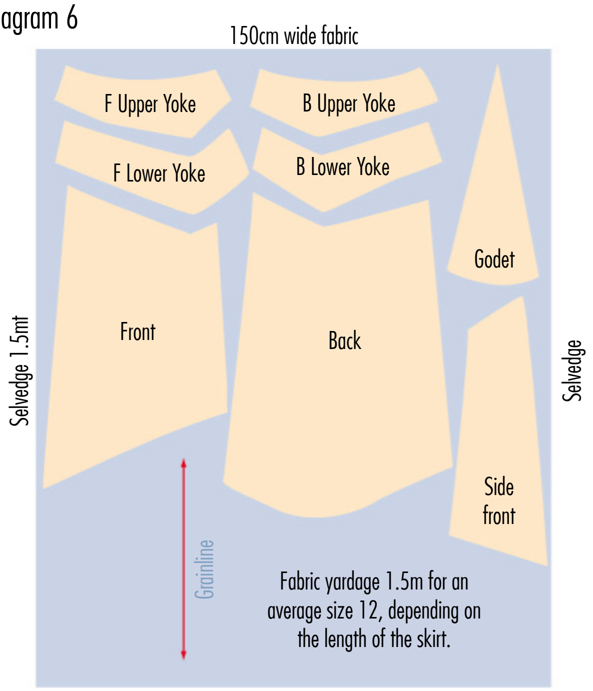
Diagram 5


115cm wide fabric
F Upper yoke
B Upper yoke
F Lower yoke
B Lower yoke
Front
Godet
Side front
Back
Grainline
Selvedge 2m
Selvedge

Fabric must be cut as a single layer for all pattern pieces, for both layouts

Fabric Yardage – 2m for an average size 12, depending on the length of the skirt

Diagram 6


150cm wide fabric
F Upper Yoke
B Upper Yoke
F Lower Yoke
B Lower Yoke
Godet
Front
Back
Side front
Grainline
Selvedge 1.5mt
Selvedge

Fabric yardage 1.5m for an average size 12, depending on the length of the skirt.

Overlock and press the seam allowances away from godet.

With the right sides together, join the front skirt to the lower yoke. Machine-stitch the seam, matching the centre front notches to avoid stretching, clipping and pivoting at the point. Overlock and press the seam.

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With right sides together, join the back skirt to the lower yoke, matching the centre back notches. Clip and pivot at the point. Machine-stitch the seam. Overlock and press the seam.

With the right sides together, join the front and back skirts at the side seams, matching the yoke lines. Leave the zipper opening on the left-hand side. Overlock and press the seams. Insert the zip in the left-hand side seam.

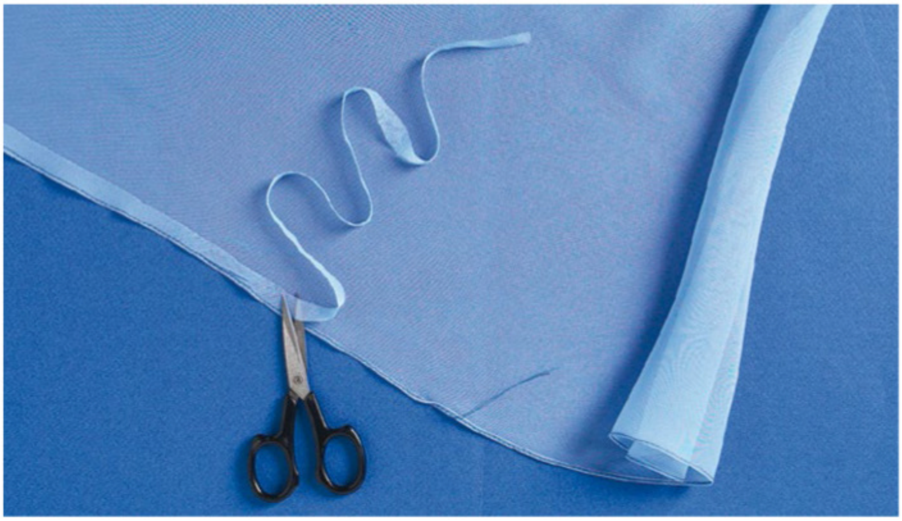
Assemble the lining as for the skirt and interface the waistline. Pin the lining in the skirt and fit it to the body. Do any alterations necessary.

With the right sides of the skirt and lining together, machine-stitch the lining to the skirt at the waistline. Trim, clip and understitch the lining. Press the waistline. Hem the lining with a scant 1.5cm (5/8in) hem. This narrow hem allowance is due to the hem shaping.

Note: The lining has been shortened by approximately 8cm (3 3/8in), but can be as small as 1cm (3/8in).

Hem the skirt by turning up 1.5cm (5/8in) hem allowance and stitch close to the folded edge. Trim the excess fabric as close to the stitching line as possible. See photo 1.

Attach the lining around the zipper and hand-stitch it in place. Give a final press.



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ST24-10-01

A Couture Essential: Hand Sewing

By Claire Shaeffer

Hand sewing is an essential element of haute couture. It's used again and again for bastings and permanent stitches.

Darners

Darners
Size 9
Richard Hemming & Son
TRADE MARK
LARGE EYE NEEDLES

Betweens

Betweens
Size 10
Richard Hemming & Son
TRADE MARK
LARGE EYE NEEDLES

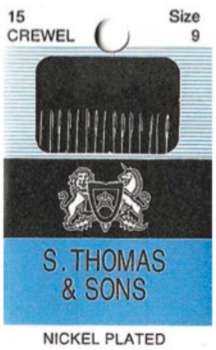
Hand stitching has many virtues. It allows you to control the fabric more easily. It's softer than machine stitching since there's only one thread, not two. It's easier to remove and less likely to mar the fabric when removed.

Needles

I use small-size needles for most sewing because they are less likely to mar the fabric. It doesn't take long before they bend and need to be discarded. I use short needles for general sewing, short basting stitches, hemming, slipstitches, herringbone and fell stitches and long needles for long stitches or to pick up multiple short stitches like running stitches.

My favourite needles are cotton darners, betweens, crewel or embroidery needles, and calyx-eye needles. I usually buy needles made in England or Germany, but you might like those made in Japan.

Waste Knot



Cotton Darners

The cotton darners are long with a long eye. They are well-suited for thread tracing, uneven bastings, stab stitches, and running stitches. Small sizes are difficult to find but well worth the effort.

Betweens and crewels

Betweens and crewels are short needles. Crewels, sometimes called embroidery needles, have a long eye and are easier to thread. They are generally used by dressmakers who push the needle with the end of the thimble. Betweens, sometimes called quilting or appliqué needles, are a little shorter than crewels and used by tailors who push the needle with the top or side of the thimble.

Calyx-eye needle

The calyx-eye needle is designed for the visually impaired and has a very small opening at the end of the eye. They are particularly useful when fastening the threads at the ends of machine stitching or when pulling both threads to one size.

Tapestry needle

The tapestry needle is a large needle with a blunt point. I use them for turning spaghetti tubing, shredding, and decorative trims.

Beginnings and Endings

Often overlooked, how you fasten the thread at the beginning and end of your hand sewing is as important as the needles, threads, and stitches you use.

Threading the needle

Thread has a twist; and if you are using machine thread, thread your hand sewing needle like a machine needle – with the end that comes off the spool. Then cut the other end.

If you find it difficult to insert the thread into the needle eye, turn the needle over and try to insert the thread from the other side. Often, the thread will pop right in because of the way the needle is made.

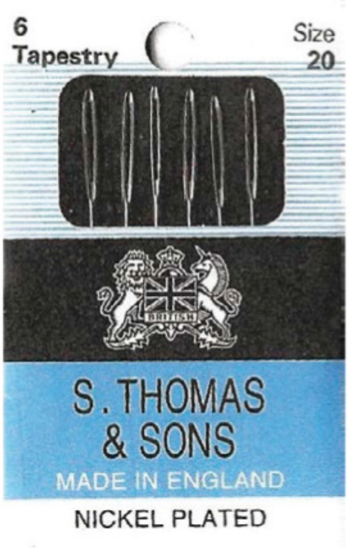
Knots

Knots are frequently used to begin when basting or sewing permanently. Generally small knots are best for permanent stitches and less likely to leave an impression when the fabric is pressed. When basting seamlines, do not stitch over knots; place the knots away from the seamline or

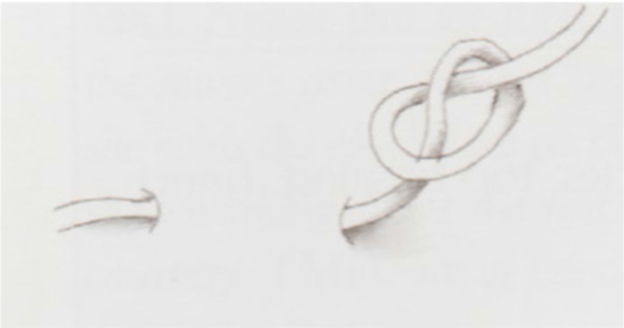
Calyx-eye

6 Needles
JJ11448
Size 4/8
John James
Est. 1840
Easy Threading
Aiguilles pour
Vue Faible
Blinden-Nadeln

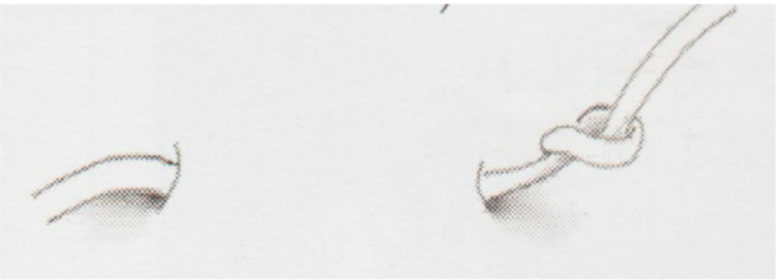
Tapestry


6
Tapestry
Size
20
S. THOMAS
& SONS
MADE IN ENGLAND
NICKEL PLATED

Simple Knot



Waste Knot



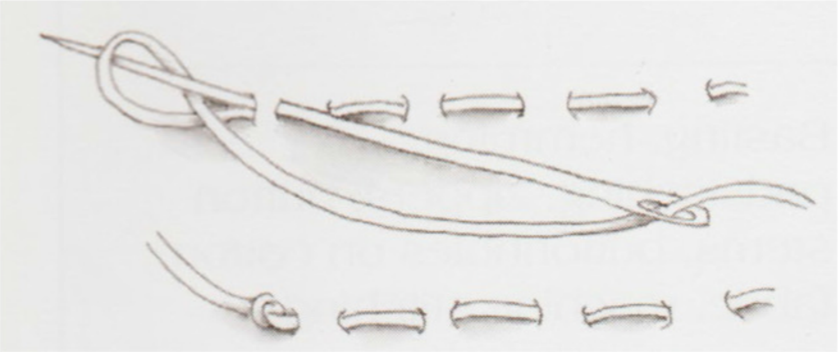
A waste knot temporarily anchors a thread until it can be secured with backstitches. It begins with a simple knot, is anchored with several back stitches, then cut off.

use waste knots.

To make a simple knot, wrap the end of the thread around your index finger once or twice. Then, using your thumb and forefinger, roll the thread off the finger; and pull the knot taut between your thumb and forefinger. For a bigger knot which you might want on open weave fabrics, wrap the thread around your finger several times. This is a nice knot to use for waste knots.

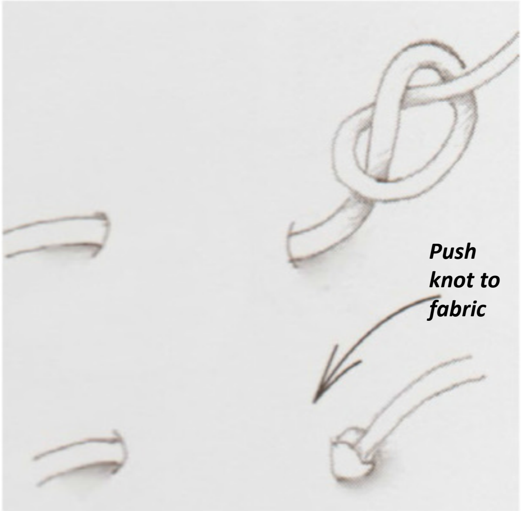
Waste knots are used to hold the thread temporarily, then they are cut away after the thread is anchored permanently or the seam is stitched. They are particularly useful when sewing buttons, buttonholes, and bastings.

Figure-8 Knot



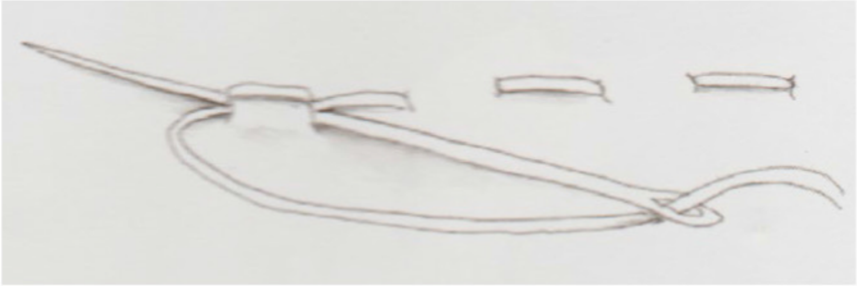
Take a tiny backstitch and wrap the thread under and around needle point before pulling needle through.

Tailor's Knot



Make a loose loop, hold it at exit point of last stitch, pull thread through and work knot down to fabric.

Backstitch



For permanent stitches, I like a very small knot. To make a small knot, place the thread on your index finger, then place the needle on the thread. Wrap the thread around the needle point once. Hold the thread on the needle with your left or free hand. Wrap the thread coming from the needle eye around the needle point, not the short end on your finger. Pull the needle through with your right or free hand. Trim away the thread tail below the knot.

The figure-eight knot is my favourite for fastening the thread at the end of permanent stitches. Pick up a very tiny stitch; wrap the thread from the needle eye around the point of the needle to make a figure-eight. Pull the thread through to form a tiny knot on the fabric surface. I like to hide the knot and thread end. To do this, insert the needle next to the knot and pull it out about 1.2cm away. Hold the thread taut so the knot will slide between the yarns. Cut the thread close to the fabric; the thread end will disappear between the layers.

The tailor's knot is used most often to secure machine stitching at the beginning and end. Pull the needle and bobbin threads to one side and twist them together. Make a loose loop; then using your thumb and forefinger, work the knot down to the fabric. Pull the thread ends taut. When learning this knot, insert a pin into the loop; then pull the thread taut on the fabric.

Backstitches

Backstitches or several stitches on top of each other are an alternative to a knot. They can be used for basting or permanent hand stitching and are often used with a waste knot to anchor the thread. Generally, they are flat and inconspicuous but they can be difficult to remove when stitched over.

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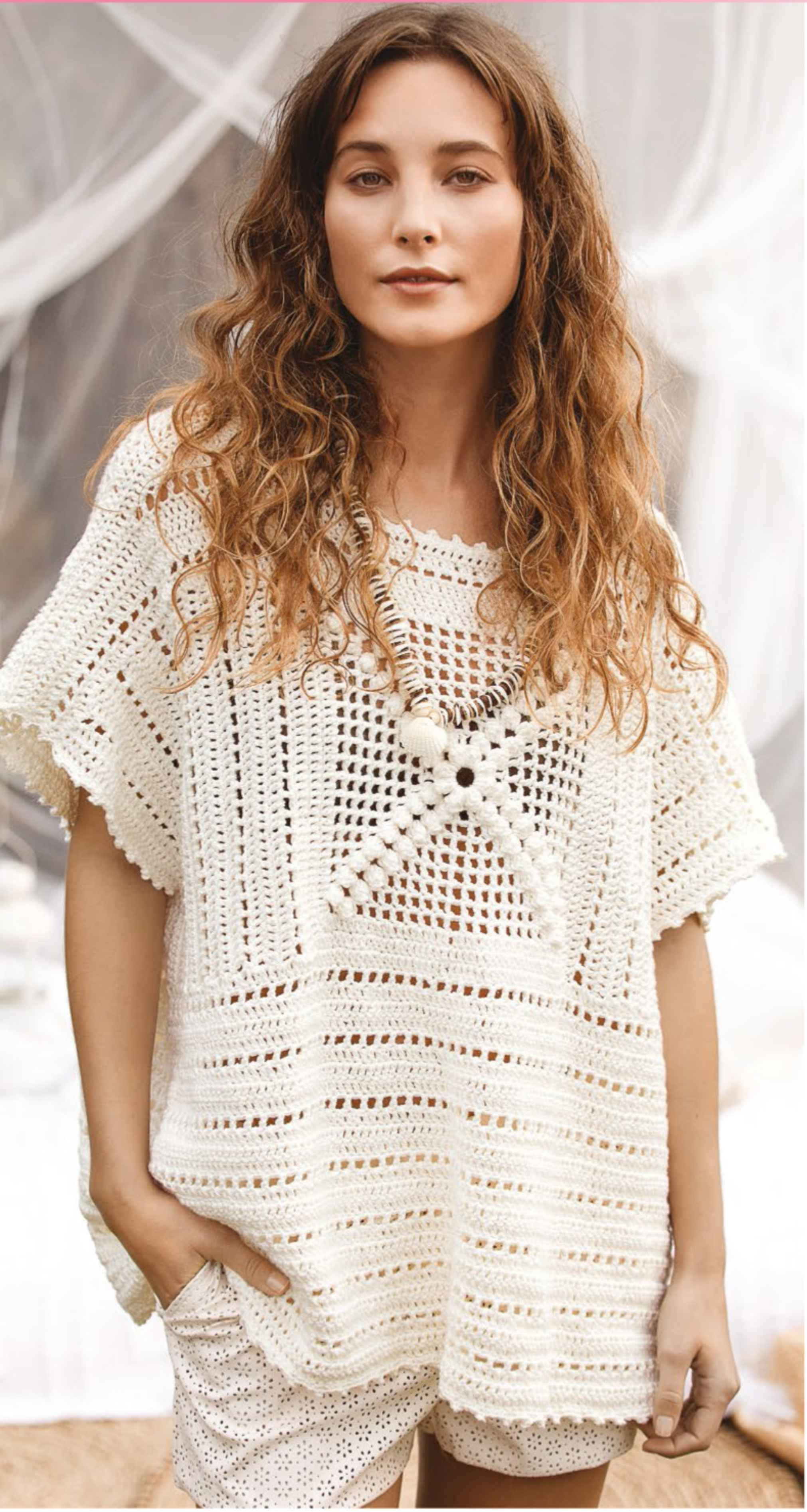

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Shorten Sleeves – leather or suede jacket

By Judith Turner

Most leather and suede jackets will be topstitched around the bottom of the sleeve. This can be repeated by using a Teflon foot or a Walking foot; however Judith's method of shortening leather jackets means you do not need to topstitch, and therefore worrying about the leather or suede stretching, particularly if it is soft.

I use this method of securing the hem allowance on all leather garments, such as leather trousers and skirts.

An alteration shop could charge up to $55 - $65 to shorten the sleeves. Imagine how much you can save by doing it yourself.

I am going to take you through the steps in this article, however I have produced an eBook which is 18 pages and includes at the end, a video which starts at the beginning on how to determine the right length through to the final step. It can be purchased from my website at www.geniecentre.com/ebooks-to-alter-your-clothes/ and is on sale for $9.95.

First important point is that leather is difficult to pin. So rather than use pins I use bull dog clips. I fold the excess fabric under and secure with a clip. I would not leave the clip in too long, because it can mark the leather, however it is in long enough for me to work out how much needs to come off the sleeve and what the finished length of the inside arm will be.

Access to the ends of the sleeves is through an opening in the lining. If there is not an opening in one of the sleeves, make one. Pop both sleeves through this opening.

Mark and cut the leather first. Measure from the original hem line up to the top of the tape measure and place a mark. Then move down the tape measure and mark the hem allowance. ALWAYS use the same hem allowance that is on the garment. If you do change it you must make a change to the lining.

I mark in three places on one side and three on the other side. This way when I come to folding the hem allowance up I have lots of marks to work with.

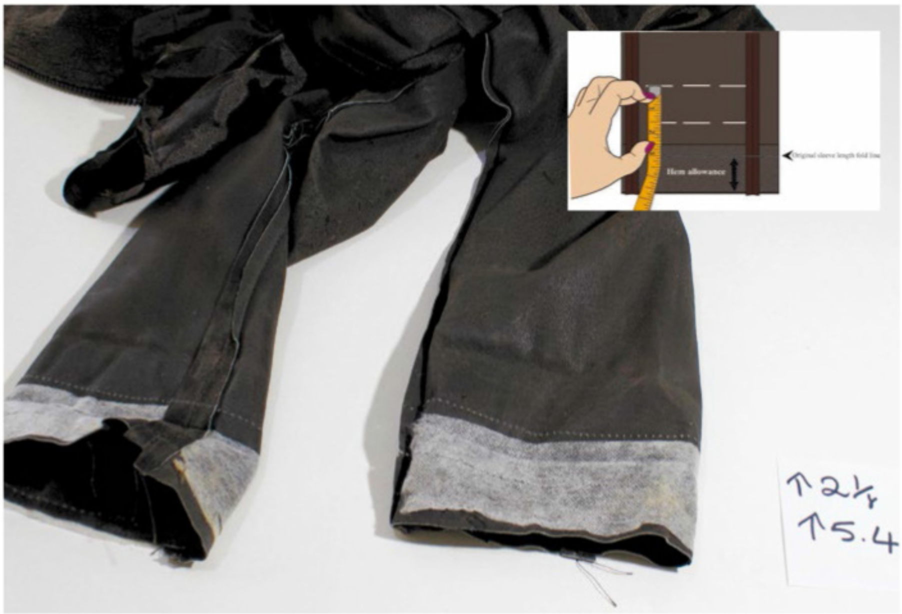
I have included an illustration to show how the sleeve should be marked. Note also that I always mark on the wrong side of the leather/ fabric, rather than the right side.

Cut the lining in the same way. The only difference is that the lining has a standard seam allowance, rather than a hem allowance like the leather.

Now we come to my method of securing leather. My magic trick is double sided tape purchased from a sail maker. This particular tape is a good quality tape and is very strong. This is not the cheap tape you can purchase at a $2 shop. My guy charges me $5 for a roll. Google sail maker and give them a call. It is called Kikusui Tape.

The easiest way to attach the tape is to slide the sleeve (inside out of course) onto a tailors arm. As the tape is taken off the roll, you will notice that one side is sticky and the other has paper covering the opposite sticky side.

Lay the tape on either side of the chalk mark. This is another reason to mark in a few places so that you



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